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Three counsels of the divine

THREE COUNSELS

OF

THE DIVINE MASTER

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FOR THE

Conduct of the Spiritual Life

PART I.—THE COUNSEL FOR THE COMMENCEMENT
PART II.—THE COUNSEL FOR THE VIRTUES
PART III.—THE COUNSEL FOR THE CONFLICT

By EDWARD MEYRICK GOULBURN, D.D.
DEAN OF NORWICH

'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
St. John vi. 68.

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TO

THE HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

The Lord Bishop of Norwich

TO WHOSE GODLY EXAMPLE

AND UNOSTENTATIOUS PRACTICE OF CHRISTIAN VIRTUES

THE WRITER IS INDEBTED FOR EDIFICATION,

AND TO WHOSE COURTESY AND CONSIDERATE KINDNESS

HE OWES TWENTY-TWO HAPPY YEARS OF

PLEASANT FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE AND HARMONIOUS

CO-OPERATION,

THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED

WITH VENERATION FOR HIS OFFICE

AND ESTEEM AND AFFECTION FOR HIS PERSON.

PREFACE

THOSE who, at any period of the Church's history, put forth works designed to guide the Christian in the conduct of the spiritual life, may always find sufficient apology for what they do, in the variety either of men's characters, or of the circumstances of the age.

First, it is good that Divine Truth, and especially a portion of it so concerning, and of such moment, as that which has to do with holy living, should be exhibited under different aspects,—reflected under the various angles of incidence at which it strikes various minds. The aspect of it, which comes home powerfully to one mind, may be expected to attract and influence minds similarly constituted, while those of a different cast will find it to be unimpressive, and, while they in no way question or deny it, will not recognise in it anything helpful for themselves. The weightiest and most exhaustive treatises, which really say everything that is to be said on their subject (such a work, for example, as Marshall on *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*), will often fail of interesting, while books comparatively slight and superficial, which present the old familiar truth under a new

light, will win their way, principally from the reader's finding his own mind to be in touch with the mind of the writer. The present author trusts that the Three Counsels of the Divine Master for the conduct of the Spiritual Life (in its commencement, its graces, and its antagonisms), which he has endeavoured to expound and expand in this treatise, may, by the power of the Holy Spirit, approve themselves to some of his readers as practically helpful. These counsels are offered as a rule of life,—as meant to be acted on. For those who seek in them something different from this (as, for example, for striking expositions or illustrations of Holy Scripture), they will have little or no interest. The Three Counsels scarcely require explanation ; the simplest can understand them. It is only as a guide and help in holy living that they have value, and worth, and weight,—the weight which is lent to them by the authority of Him who gave them, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

Again : the constant alteration of manners and ways of thought, and the ever shifting usages of society which, like the individual men and women composing it, "never continueth in one stay," demands that the spiritual books of a former generation should be adapted to the wants of our own. Evil, both in doctrine and in practice, assumes new shapes, in which it did not present itself to our ancestors ; new tides of thought and new fashions

set in, which have to be submitted, as they arise, to the criterion (one and the same throughout all ages) of the Evangelical Law, as laid down by the Divine Master. The principles are as old as the Gospel itself, but they have to be applied in new directions, so as to meet new forms of sin and error. And hence there will be a perpetually recurring need for re-casting our instructions as to holy living. The author has endeavoured to keep in view this need throughout the treatise. What is said, for example, in Chapter I. (Introductory) as to the sphere of God's service for each individual being that in which he finds himself in the order of God's Providence, and, further on, in Part II., Chapter I., as to the sphere of service for Christian women, will show, he trusts, that he has not been unmindful of the ways of thought and habits of the present day, and has endeavoured to point out the bearing upon them of the great principles of duty announced in the New Testament.

A word needs to be said here of the Introductory Chapters, and their pertinence to the general argument. The case principally contemplated by the author is that of a person who, by the operation of the grace of his Baptism, is earnestly desirous of serving and pleasing God, but has not yet attained to see that the first step in such a course must be the coming to Christ, to receive *from* Him a full and free pardon, and *in* Him a full and free acceptance

with God, and peace (or "rest") in the consciousness of that free pardon and acceptance. The other two counsels, that which regards the virtues of the Christian character, and that for the conflict with "sin, the world, and the devil," are designed to build up the disciple on the foundation of the pardon and acceptance which have been granted to him from without, and of the peace which has established itself within, from the realisation through faith of that pardon and acceptance. (In saying, however, that this is the case *chiefly* contemplated, I desire to guard against its being inferred that the first and fundamental step of the spiritual life will not have to be repeated throughout its whole course. Though the daily prayer and effort of every true disciple will be to be "kept this day without sin," yet all experience shows that this cannot perfectly be done, so long as we are in the body; and, as to the subjective estimate of sin, the daily comings short of the highest standard in word, in temper, in the improvement of time, will become more and more distressing to the conscience, and assume a more serious aspect, in proportion to our growth in grace and knowledge. What then remains but recurrence again and again to the initial counsel, "Come unto me";—a laying down at the feet of the Divine Master the newly-contracted burden, and receiving strength from Him, when relieved of it, for a new departure?) The case chiefly contemplated, then, being that of one who has yet

to take the earliest step in a religious life, some preliminary admonitions and advices were evidently necessary. The beginner needs to be put upon his guard against the fallacy that separation from secular and natural ties is necessary in order to the leading of a spiritual life. Still more urgently does he need a warning that his surrender to God must be complete and unreserved,—the offering of a whole heart,—if it is to be accepted. And the nature of the guidance which he is to look for and may expect,—that it is through the movement of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, God's eye meeting man's eye continually, and indicating to him the way in which he should walk,—still more needs explanation. A mistake at the outset on any of these heads might vitiate the entire process of the spiritual life, and work itself out in failure sooner or later, even where the original intention was good.

As to the connexion with the argument of the Supplementary Chapters, it is pointed out in the short Introduction prefixed to them. The author hopes that these Chapters may be helpful on points which are apt to harass earnest Christians, and to hinder them from "serving God with a quiet mind."

Life goes on apace, as it nears its close; days and hours rush by, treading upon one another's heels with a bewildering rapidity, to-day's experience erasing from the memory that of yesterday, as a rising tide, creeping upwards, obliterates the marks

which but a few minutes before we made upon the sand. It is with some solemnity of mind, as feeling that this will probably be his last publication, that the writer lays down his pen, and commends his work to Him, whose "blessing" alone "maketh rich," and who can make use even of the feeblest and unworthiest instruments in edifying souls, and furthering that kingdom of grace, which is eventually to merge and be asorbed in the kingdom of glory.

E. M. G.

14 Lansdowne Place, Brighton,
August 31, 1888.

*** Perhaps this is the fittest place in which to say that the distinction drawn between "Ask," "Seek," and "Knock," in Part III. Chapter XIII. ("The Character of Successful Prayer") is not original. It is borrowed from a sermon preached some years ago, I think before the University of Cambridge, which appeared afterwards in *The Church of England Pulpit.* A considerable interval of time has gone by since I read it there; and I have failed to lay my hand upon the number of *The Pulpit* containing it. If I could do this, I should be more specific in my acknowledgments. The Sermon was, I think, upon the same text as stands at the head of the Chapter just referred to.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

BIDE WHERE YOU ARE

The sphere in which we are to serve God, 1—Tendency to think seclusion from ordinary and secular life necessary, 1—This notion at the root of the monastic system, 1—Common life the sphere for the majority, 2—This taught by Christ in St. John xvii. 15, 2—By St. Paul to the Corinthians, 3-7—Different meanings suggested for 1 Cor. vii. 21, 4 and *n.*—Condition of Roman slaves, 5 and *n.*—St. John the Baptist's counsel to the publicans and soldiers, 7—Heavenly revelations given to men when engaged in their daily callings, *e.g.* Moses, Gideon, David, Elisha, the shepherds of Bethlehem, the Wise Men, the Apostles, 8, 9—The fundamental counsel for Christians to bide where they are, and serve God where he has placed them, 10—This disappointing to many, 10—Restlessness of the age, and a general discontent with our natural position, 11—Seen in all classes, 11, 12—This especially the case in the spiritual life, 12—Temptation to join a sisterhood to escape distasteful home duties, 12, 13—Summary contained in 1 Cor. vii. 20, 14—Exceptions glanced at in verse 21, but the scriptural rule is clear, 14.

CHAPTER II

TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS

Psalm li. the expression of David's penitence after his double sin, 16—His repentance delayed, and his conscience lulled till roused by Nathan, 16-19—On confessing his sin, he receives the assurance

of forgiveness, 20—Truth in the inward parts the foundation of the spiritual life, 21—(1) *Truth as regards the past*, 21, 22—Candour towards God, our neighbour, ourselves, essential to peace, and to a whole-hearted service of God, 21—Relief to a burdened conscience in following the advice in the communion service to confess to a minister of God, 21, 22—This confession distinct from habitual confession, 22—(2) *Truth as regards the future*, 22-24—To be what God would have us be, saints, 22, 23—To do whatever God would have us to do, 23—To suffer whatever God would have us suffer, 23, 24—Tests of the reality of our surrender to God—(1) Money; do we give God his full share as a matter of conscience, or on a chance impulse, 24, 25—(2) Government of the tongue requiring constant watchfulness, 25, 26—Too little self-discipline, self-denial, and self-control in our lives, 26—Willingness to be saved by the Cross, but not to bear it, 27—A surrendered will not a natural gift but a special grace, 28.

CHAPTER III

THE GUIDANCE OF THE EYE

The guidance God gives to those who honestly desire to serve Him, 29, 30—This guidance depends on our complete self-surrender, 30—*e.g.* in St. Paul's conversion, 30—Three methods of Divine guidance, by the hand, in Providence, 30—By the mouth, in Holy Scripture, 31—By the eye, 31—This guidance for what we have to do, not for suffering, because in suffering we have only to accept God's will, 31—Why do we need guidance over and above what the Bible gives, 31—Because the Bible gives principles, not rules of duty, 31—One principle to be balanced by another, 31, 32—*e.g.* secret alms-giving, and yet letting our light shine before men, 32—Times of private prayer not enjoined in the Scriptures, 33—The principle of non-resistance to injury balanced by the fact of resistance to violence being sometimes lawful, *e.g.* St. Paul at Philippi, 33—Guidance of God's eye the moving of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, 35—The mother's relationship an emblem in Holy Scripture of God's relationship to his people, 36, 37—Individual character of the guidance of the eye, 37—God has an alternative guidance for those who will not yield to the gentler one, the bit and bridle of stern discipline, 38—Manasseh and Nebuchadnezzar both subjected to this, and repented, 38, 39—Sennacherib and Balaam corrected by it, but not converted, 39—Only choice between guidance of the eye and that of the bit and bridle, 40—To be guided by God's eye we must keep our gaze upon Him, 41.

CHAPTER IV

CONSCIENCE

Conscience the internal organ, as Providence and Holy Scripture are the external ones, by which God communicates with, controls, and directs the human soul, 42—Conscience man's inner eye, 43—Confusion of thought on the subject of the conscience, 43—Conscientious actions not necessarily right, 44—*e.g.* St. Paul's persecution of the Christians, the Hindoo mother throwing her child before the car of Juggernaut, 44—Unless the conscience is enlightened, 44, 45—The Holy Spirit the light of the conscience, 45—His light prayed for in the Collect for St. John the Evangelist's Day, 45—Holy Scripture recognises the liability of the conscience to derangement, 45, 46—A seared conscience insensible through long resistance, 46—Possible allusion to the branding of slaves in 1 Tim. iv. 2, 46—A defiled conscience, the means whereby it may be purified, 47, 48—No remedy indicated by St. Paul for the seared conscience,—the only remedy the restoration of sensibility by the Holy Spirit, 47 *n.*—Meaning of the conscience being purged, 48 and *n.*—Weak consciences morbidly sensitive, 49—Defilement of conscience in 1 Cor. viii. 4, 7, not the same as that spoken of in Tit. i. 15, 49 *n.*—Different word in the original for *defile* in the two passages,—the first suggests external defilement, the other a deep moral taint, 50 *n.*—Tendency in the weak conscience to judge others who do not accept its own restrictions,—*e.g.* total abstinence, 51, 52—A weak conscience a drawback in the spiritual life, 52—Morbid scruples destroy peace of mind, 52-54—Instances of such, 53—Different remedies provided for different maladies of the conscience, 55—The defiled conscience must be purged by the precious blood of Christ, 55—The morbid conscience freed from its scruples by the Holy Spirit granting to it a right judgment and his holy comfort, 55—The seared conscience by its sensibility being restored by divine power, 55—God's light supplemented by man's eye, 56—Guidance by the eye of God suggests the thought of a personal God whose glance is on the heart of man, 56—Man must respond to the divine glance, 56.

PART I

THE INITIAL COUNSEL

CHAPTER I

THE REST THAT IS GIVEN

Two rests mentioned in St. Matt. xi. 28, 29, one given, the other found by exertion and self-discipline, 60—In the Comfortable Words, in the Communion Office, only the first rest is mentioned, 60—Baptism the entrance into God's service and into the school of Christ, 61—Baptism a past, not a future step to most of us, 61—How it works in with this passage, 61—Two invitations given by Christ, (*a*) to the weary and heavy-laden, (*b*) to the children, 61, 62—The burden of original sin lying on all persons at their birth, therefore children too can be included in the first invitation, 62—Children cannot come to Christ, so the Church brings them to be grafted into his mystical Body, 62, 63—The whole transaction based on the understanding that the child will, when old enough, come to Christ with faith and surrender, 63—The first step is to realise our Baptism, 63—The difference between being only heavy-laden and labouring under the burden of sin, 63, 64—Between having only a conscience of sin and a sense of sin, 64—Sin, as an outrage against God, the chief thought in godly sorrow, 65—We are brought within range of the invitation if we have any real sense of the burden, 65—The contrition, even of the saints, inadequate, 65—"Come unto Me," words for all time, 65—No recorded case of the sick coming to Christ without being healed, 66—His individual dealing with each case, 66—Maladies of the soul, laid before Him in prayer, equally relieved in his good time, 66—But to obtain healing, the will must be thoroughly roused to desire it, 67—The translation "I will refresh you" more strictly accurate, 67, 68—Nature and character of the rest given, 68—The rest is the revelation of the Father character of God by the Son, 69, 70—The realisation of this the first step of acting out our Baptism, 71.

CHAPTER II

THE REST THAT IS FOUND

Two rests spoken of in S. Matt. xi. 28, 29—The first *given*, consisting in the knowledge of God as our reconciled Father, 72—The second, the rest *found*, distinct from the rest *given*, 72—Finding implies the effort of seeking, 72, 73—To find this rest we must submit to a yoke, 73—Force of "*My* yoke," "*My* burden," 73—The yoke borne by Him imposed on us, 73, 74—Observance of his precepts part of the yoke, 74—His providential orderings another part, 74—The whole yoke is to cultivate in ourselves the mind of Christ, 75—Condescension an obvious feature of his mind, 75, 76—Two features of his mind, self-sacrifice and sympathy, 77—Self-denial the disavowing or ignoring of self, 77 *n.*—What the yoke is, 78—Each day furnishes occasions for taking up the cross, 78—Two divisions of our nature to be mortified, (1) temptation to anger, (2) to self-indulgence, 78, 79—Bearing the burden by sympathy—this the law of Christ, because He is the great burden-bearer, 80—He bore not only the burden of human iniquity, but the infirmities of his disciples, 80—The daily aim to mortify selfishness, and so to bear Christ's burden, 81—The higher nature finds rest in acts of mortification and sympathy, 82—The yoke easy, and burden light, because our Lord has borne all for us, 83, 84—The entire sanctification of the Christian involved in these two precepts, 84.

PART II

COUNSELS RESPECTING THE VIRTUES

CHAPTER I

CHRIST'S VIRTUES OF THE FEMININE TYPE

Coming to Christ the first step in the spiritual life, 89—The two rests, one given, the second found by effort, and consisting in the possession of the mind of Christ, 89—Christ's mind summarised by Himself, 89—Self-sacrifice and sympathy, 89—Exhibited by

all four Evangelists, 90—Set forth by our Lord in the Beatitudes, 91—By St. Paul and St. Peter, 91—Holy Living reduced to three elements by Bishop Taylor, 92, 93—But regarded by him too independently of the example of Christ, 93—Christ the sum of Christian doctrine and precept, 93—The feminine virtues specially shown in Him—In the sphere in which He moved on earth, 94—In his miracles, 95, 96—His triumph one of moral, not physical force, 97—He raised woman to her present position in Christian lands, 98—Christianity the means of introducing a new moral order, 98—Only the masculine virtues appreciated in antiquity, 98—Social revolution in these days affecting family life, 99, 100—The Fifth Commandment set at nought, 100—A desire to sweep away the Scriptural restraints on marriage, 100—New facilities for divorce, 100—The root of these a desire to unsex the woman and give her man's work to do, 100, 101—Christ emphasized the feminine virtues, by taking them specially into union with his Godhead, and by inculcating them in his teaching, 102.

CHAPTER II

POVERTY OF SPIRIT

The mind of Christ delineated in the Beatitudes, 104—Force of the words "He opened his mouth," 104—The Beatitudes show his mind transferred into the minds of his people, 105—Seven a perfect number, 105—The eighth Beatitude repeats the promise of the first, 106—Beatitudes fall into two groups, 106—The first four give the inward development, the last four the outward deportment of the spiritual mind, 106—The first contains the germ of the other seven, 106, 107—Humility the fundamental virtue, 107—It can only come from Christ, 107—His humility in his Incarnation, his life on earth, his death, 108—His poverty of spirit to pass by grace to his disciples, 108—But as they are sinners it must have a deeper tinge of humiliation, 109—False condescension a form of pride, 109, 110—The condescension of Christ involves self-sacrifice, 110—Self-emptying before God the fundamental step in the spiritual life, 110, 111—It is easy to deceive ourselves with regard to humility, 112—This Beatitude the Gospel our Lord preached to the poor, 113—Echoed by St. James, 113—The six following Beatitudes the constituent elements of the kingdom, 114—Faith not explicitly mentioned, but implicitly included in the first, because saving faith is receiving from Christ's fulness the supply of our spiritual wants, and for this we must be empty of self, 114, 115—Summary of the first

Beatitude that the spiritual life is founded in lowliness of heart, this the condescension of Christ transplanted into the mind of the disciple, 115—Mystery in the connexion of humility with the Atonement, and with our justification and faith, 116—Humility a necessary condition of the approbation of God, 116.

CHAPTER III

MOURNING

Our Lord a life-long mourner, 118—We never hear of his having laughed or smiled, 119, 120—This in keeping with his mission as the sin-bearer, 119—Pre-eminently the Man of Sorrows, because of the sin of the world, 120—This burden the heavier because of his perfect sinlessness and his deep love, 120-122—He was subjected all his earthly life to the discipline of sorrow, 123—Meaning of "made perfect," 123, 124—How his sinless humanity could be taken from a sinner by the power of the Holy Ghost, 123 *n.*—"Perfect" in the Greek not only implies completeness, but priestly consecration; so rendered in Heb. vii. 28, 124—The grace of mourning reproduced in the disciple, 124, 125—First takes the shape of repentance, 125—A worldly sorrow for sin distinct from godly sorrow, 126—St. Paul enumerates the elements of godly sorrow, 126—These tests for ourselves, 126—Christ has no share in repentance as we must experience it, 126—Theory of a vicarious repentance of Christ, 126 *n.*—Those under the Old Dispensation who mourned for the sins of others, 126, 127—The discipline of sorrow with us not only perfecting, but purifying, 128—Christ not only a Man of Sorrows, but a man of joy, Heb. xii. 2, St. Luke x. 17, 21, 129—Even the prophetical Psalm xxii. ends in joy, 129—His joy and peace purchased by Him for his disciples, 130—Wrapped up in each of the Beatitude blessings, 130—Christ the divine burden-bearer, 131—His true people are burden-bearers; this blessing for them, 131.

CHAPTER IV

MEEKNESS

Connexion with the last Beatitude, 133—Peace in the conscience makes us long-suffering and gentle, 133—Meekness a characteristic feature of the mind of Christ (S. Matt. xi. 29), 134—The same predominance given in St. Paul's catalogue of the fruits of

the Spirit, 134—One third of the Christian graces represented by meekness, 134—St. Peter does not emphasise meekness, but gives the allied grace of patience, 134—The meekness of Christ foretold by prophets, 135—Described afterwards by Apostles, 135 Recounted by Evangelists as a feature of the Passion, 135—Shown towards Malchus, Judas, and before the high priest, 135, 136—Even his most saintly followers fall short of this, *e.g.* St. Paul before the high priest, 136, 137—Meekness transferred into the mind of the disciple, its complexion altered, as being in the mind of a sinner, 137—The fact of being sinners a stronger reason for our meekness, 137—Injury or insult, through whoever it may come, yet being permitted by God, comes to us from his hand, 138—In what the special blessedness of the meek consists, 139—Our Lord here is quoting from Psalm xxxvii., where the words inheriting and possessing the earth occur six times, 139—Christ's promise refers to the present and future state of his disciples; (1) the present,—for the meek heart being at peace can enter into and appreciate all the blessings of the earth which God gives him here, and so, without owning the earth may yet possess it, 140—(2) Complete fulfilment for the future (See Rev. v. 10), possibly the recompense foretold in the parable of the Pounds, 141—The ultimate kingdom over the earth given to the meek, in whose hearts the kingdom of heaven is now established, 142—Watchfulness and prayer necessary to attain this grace, 143.

CHAPTER V

HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

Sequence of thought from the preceding Beatitude, 144—Simple acquiescence in God's will compatible with and leading up to lofty aspiration, 144—An appetite for righteousness necessary for a healthy moral condition, 145—Hunger and thirst after righteousness a feature of the mind of Christ—summed up in two points, a desire to do and to suffer according to his Father's will, 146—The doing of God's will in the salvation of man, the suffering of God's will which made that salvation practicable, 146, 147—This desire seen on several occasions, St. John vi. 38, iv. 34, St. Luke xii. 50, 147—This grace modified by translation into the disciple's mind, 148—The new life imparted to the soul by God in regeneration the ground of this hunger and thirst, 149—Spiritual life, like natural, requires nourishment; craving for this nourishment necessary for spiritual growth, 149—(1) Righteousness of Justification, 149—(2) Righteousness of Sanctification, 150—Means of Sanctification, (*a*) the Word of God, 150, 151—

(*b*) The Ordinances of religion, especially the Holy Communion, 152—The true Christian longs to be, to do, and to suffer all that God would have him be, do, and suffer, 152—Promise given to this Beatitude, 153, 154—Prominence given by all the four Evangelists to the Miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand, 154—Our Lord teaches us God's love for his human creatures by his care for animals, and his Fatherly love from the analogy of an earthly father's love, 154, 155—God never gives a craving without providing satisfaction for it; so to the craving of the soul He will respond, 155—St. Paul does not mention this spiritual hunger and thirst among the heavenly tempers, because he writes after Pentecost from a different standpoint, 155, 156—St. Peter implies effort and desire in the words, "Giving all diligence," 156, 157.

CHAPTER VI

MERCIFULNESS

Care in the arrangement of the Beatitudes, as in the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, 158—Not isolated sayings, 159—Love finds its place in this Beatitude, 159 — Mercy the attitude love takes towards sin and sorrow, 159—The divine love of the Holy Trinity, when poured forth on the human world, takes the form of deep compassion for human suffering, hastening to its relief, 159, 160—This Beatitude specially emphasised by Christ, by precept, by three parables, by weaving it into the Lord's Prayer, 160—And by his life's work, which consisted of spiritual and corporal acts of mercy, 161, 162 — Seven corporal and seven spiritual works of mercy enumerated, 161 *n.*—Mercifulness in the mind of the disciple, 163—Meaning of "religion" in St. James i. 27, 164 *n.*—The more separate from sin, the greater the power of sympathy, 166—Showing mercy a necessary condition of receiving it, 165, 166—Shown in the Lord's Prayer, 166—A condition only, not a procuring cause, 166—Nor an instrumental cause—only faith can be that, 167—Where there is no distribution of mercy, there will be no receptivity for it, 167—The sense of God's pardoning love to us the secret of true compassionateness, 168.

CHAPTER VII

PURITY OF HEART

Connexion between this blessing and that of the last Beatitude, 169—Mercifulness not a spurious compassion of the natural man, 169—

Easy-going benevolence sometimes regarded as an excuse for self-indulgence, 169, 170—Heart used in Scripture in three senses, and purity of heart has a different meaning in each, 170—(1) Heart as the conscience; (2) as the affections and desires; (3) the intention of an action, 171—Purity of heart would mean (1) a clear conscience toward God and man, 171; (2) that God has the first place in our hearts, 171, 172; (3) a single intention in all things to please God, 172; in other words, conscientiousness, heavenly-mindedness, single-mindedness, 172—In a strict sense, no disciple can be pure in heart, because of a sinful nature, 172—Our Lord alone pure, 173—We can only be so through his cleansing, 174—(1) The *conscience* cleansed externally by the blood of Christ, internally by faith, 174, 175—Consciousness of forgiveness rouses the will to keep pure that which has been cleansed, 175, 176—(2) A pure heart, in the sense of the *affections*, will be given to God undividedly; will not feel any person or thing indispensable to its happiness, 176, 177—God sends bereavement to bring us back to purity of heart, 177—Thankful appreciation of blessings distinct from idolizing them, 177—(3) Purity of heart in the sense of the *intention* is a single eye to God's glory and service in all that we do, 177—St. Paul teaches us that God may be glorified in the performance of the simplest actions, 177, 178—Hence the importance of doing well small commonplace duties, 179—The blessing promised to purity of heart, the vision of God, 179, 180—In its highest sense this blessing our Lord's only, 180—For us, the vision of God is in and through Christ, 180—The vision of God given *now* to the pure in heart is a sense of his favour, and of our acceptance, shed abroad in our hearts, 181—*Hereafter* the vision of Christ will be a transforming vision, 182, 183.

CHAPTER VIII

PEACEMAKING

The Beatitudes constructed on the lines of the Decalogue in its two tables, 184—After the fundamental blessing on poverty of spirit they are in pairs, one of each glancing towards God, the other towards man, 184—Our Lord the exemplar of each Beatitude, 185—None more distinctive of Him than peacemaking; He brought peace, made peace between God and man, 185—And between man and his neighbour, 186, 187—Between man and himself, 187, 188—Bequeathed peace—His peace not only *wished* in the customary Jewish valediction, but *given*, "My peace I *give* unto you," 188—This grace exhibited in the disciple, 188—Christ possesses peace (1) in virtue of his divine nature; (2) as a

perfectly sinless Man, 189—The disciple only derives peace from his Master, 189—He cannot be a peacemaker till he has found peace with God through Christ, 189—It is not enough to be peaceable ; we must "follow peace" by effort, 190, 192—Must be peacemakers, 192—The highest order of peacemakers those who help to reconcile man to God, and so to himself, 192—A true disciple a healing influence in society, 193—The tongue the means of stirring up strife, and also of peacemaking, 195, 196—The blessing of peacemakers to be recognised as God's children by men here, by God hereafter, 196,—The same recognition for forgiveness of injuries (St. Matthew v. 44, 45), 197—Children recognised by their likeness to their parents, 197.

CHAPTER IX.

ENDURANCE OF PERSECUTION

The connexion between this grace and peacemaking shown in Psalm cxx. 5, 6, P.B.V., 199—Not always possible to live peaceably, 199—A high blessing promised for the meek endurance of persecution, 200—This last Beatitude the climax of all the series—taking up the cross of our Lord, 200—No persecution so terrible as what our Lord suffered from his sinlessness and the mysterious burden of the sin of the world, 200, 201—Sequence in the Beatitudes, beginning at the Birth of Christ, when He "emptied Himself" to appear as an infant on earth, and ending with the Cross, 202, 203—This grace a *passive* virtue ; these take rank before the active because specially exemplified by our Lord, 203—No virtue possible without an exercise of the will, 203—Persecution might be escaped by the will yielding to a compromise of the truth, 203, 204—Not having the cross simply laid upon us entitles us to the blessing, but the taking it up and carrying it, 204—The persecution must be endured for righteousness' sake, 204—Persecution in these days works by other methods, 205—Spiritual piety still distasteful to the world, 206—The modern temptation to softness of life, over-weening ambition, etc., 208—The special blessing the possession of the kingdom of heaven, the same as that of the first Beatitude, 209—The reason being that poverty of spirit is the seed of all graces, and the taking up the cross of persecution the full blossom, 209—This first and last blessing the only one in the present tense, 210—Christ's people both subjects and possessors of the Kingdom, 210, 211—Though the full maturity of the blessing is to come hereafter, therefore the prayer is needed, "Thy Kingdom come," 212.

SUPPLEMENT TO PART II

EXCURSUS ON 2 PET. I. 5, AND GAL. V. 22, 23

The mind of Christ sketched by St. Peter and St. Paul, 213—(1) St. Peter's catalogue of graces, 213—The Beatitudes exhibit the mind of Christ in its historical development from the Manger to the Cross, 213, 214—St. Peter arranges the virtues as coming from the fundamental virtue of faith to the crowning virtue of love, 214—Not to rely on faith without an effort of will in cultivating each grace, 215—Meaning of the word virtue, 215 and *n.*, 216 *n.*—Knowledge the only intellectual virtue named in the three catalogues, 216—Lesson for us in the single mention of it, 216, 217—Our knowledge of the Personal Word must come from study of the written Word, 217—Temperance also included in St. Paul's list; its cultivation will come under the last Beatitude, 217—But self-control is included in the initial counsel to take Christ's yoke upon us, 217, 218—Patience a form of meekness, 218—Godliness connects itself with purity of heart, 218—Brotherly-kindness with peace-making, 218—This connection shown by words of Moses to Israelites, Acts vii. 21, 218—Charity the topmost step of the ladder of graces, 219—St. Peter gives eight virtues, St. Paul nine, but two of these may be counted as one, 219—St. Paul uses the singular "fruit" of the Spirit to preserve the thought of the unity of the Spirit; same thought in 1 Cor. xii. 7, 220—St. Peter dwells on the side of the effort needed of the human will, St. Paul on the entire dependence of the virtues, both for their origin and development, on the secret working of God's grace, 220—St. Paul's order the reverse of St. Peter's; love is placed first as containing in itself all graces, and being the summary of the Evangelical Law, 221—Love opens out into other graces towards God, our neighbour, and (in the form of self-control) towards self, 221—Joy and peace fall under the second Beatitude, 221—Gentleness should be rather kindness, almost indulgence, 222—Distinction drawn by Archbishop Trench between our Lord's goodness and kindness, 222 and *n.*—Faith here not saving faith, but rather faithfulness towards men, 223—Fidelity a moral rather than a spiritual grace, 224—The working of the Holy Spirit not restricted to Pentecost, 224—A lower measure of grace granted to the Gentiles, 224—The virtue of Gentiles a fruit of the Spirit if the result of moral sense and not mere natural impulse, 224, 225—A parallel catalogue of Christian graces in Col. iii. 12, correspondence of these with the Beatitudes, 225, 226—Forbearance contrasted with long-suffering,

226—Repentance not mentioned in the Apostles' enumeration of graces because it is an introductory grace, and the Apostles would assume that all Christians had repented, 227, 228—Seven characteristics of true repentance described in 2 Cor. vii. 9-11, 228, 229.

PART III

COUNSEL FOR THE CONFLICT

CHAPTER I

WATCH AND PRAY

These words a counsel for the whole spiritual life, 233—Our Lord shows us the method of not entering into temptation, 234—We only enter into temptation by consent of the will, 235—These words uttered by Christ at the time of his Agony, 235, 236—The temptation at the time of the Agony to spare Himself from suffering and death, 236, 237—His unselfishness in giving this counsel to his disciples at such a moment, 238—"Watch" the key-note of Christ's later teaching, 239—Reproduced by St. Peter, 239, 240—Two aspects of watching; to watch *for* the second Advent, and *against* surrounding evil, 240—The spiritual life described in the New Testament as a conflict, 240—St. Paul speaks of the opposition of the world and the flesh as instigated and maintained by the Devil and his angels, 241—Meaning in the use of "wrestle" instead of fight; showing us the individual personal character of the Christian warfare, 241, 242—Prayer as essential as watchfulness, 243—Why our Lord gives first place to watching, 243—When Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he first prayed, then set a watch day and night, 243, 244.

CHAPTER II

THE KEEPING OF THE HEART AT EACH OF ITS AVENUES

The two words watch and pray expand into a whole circle of duties, 245—The counsel to watch developed in Proverbs iv. 23-26,

246—The heart means the whole of the inner man, 246, 247—The heart naturally sends out issues of death, 248—But the Holy Spirit's influences are issues of life, 249—The Christian himself spoken of as a fountain, 249—(1) The tongue the first avenue to guard, 250—Control of the tongue a satisfactory test of self-control, 251—Watchfulness over the tongue so needful because of the multitude of our words and their moral influence, 251—Words so powerful for good as well as for evil, 252—(2) The next avenue; the senses, especially the eye, 253—The ear, 253, 254—(3) The avenue of moral action, 254—Rash and precipitate action, as well as mechanical action, unwatchfulness of the heart, 254, 255—Each trifling duty consecrated by setting God before us in it, 255.

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

BIDE WHERE YOU ARE

Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.—1 Cor. vii. 20, 21, 24.

This book is designed to furnish helps for that large class of persons who, while they earnestly desire to serve God and to follow the Divine Master, need a little guidance somewhat more definite and systematic than they usually get from sermons.

And, first, by way of foundation to all that is to follow, let me say a word upon the sphere in which God is to be served, Christ followed, and the spiritual life led. There is an almost ineradicable tendency in the human mind to imagine that, in order to correspond with the spirituality which has to be cultivated, there must be a seclusion from ordinary secular pursuits. This notion lay at the root of the monastic system, which took its rise from the apparent incompatibility of worldly cares and occupations with any high standard of spiritual life. Without going the

length of saying that comparative seclusion from society, and addiction to devotional exercise as more or less the business of one's day—in short, a life like that of St. John the Baptist,[1] or of Anna[2] the prophetess—may not be for certain souls their congenial sphere and providential vocation, we may yet assert with some confidence that for the vast majority of mankind common life in the world is the sphere in which God is to be served. This is what our Lord teaches in one petition of his great High-Priestly Prayer, when He asks that his Apostles may not be taken out of the world, but guarded from the evil that is in the world.[3] If the surroundings even of a heathen world were not inconsistent or incompatible with the loftiest and most sacred of all spiritual vocations,—that of the Apostles,—how can the surroundings of a world, at least nominally and externally Christianised, be inconsistent with the vocation of an ordinary disciple? It would be clear from this passage, even if it stood alone, that there can be no necessity whatever to go out of our providential sphere in order to serve God acceptably, nay, and to receive from Him all manner of high and gracious communications. For this, any "state of life," any calling (supposing it always to be an honest and lawful one—we are not speaking of the trade of the brigand, the burglar, or the coiner) will serve the purpose, so much so that it is almost a matter of

[1] *See* St. Luke i. 80; St. Matt. iii. 1, 4.

[2] *See* St. Luke ii. 36, 37. I may perhaps be allowed to refer to my work on *The Cathedral System*, in the third Chapter of which I have ventured to find in "Anna the prophetess" something typical of that life of continual attendance upon the services of the House of God, which Cathedral Establishments are designed to exhibit.

[3] *See* St. John xvii. 15.

indifference to our service of God, and to our holding high communion with Him, what station we hold, and what duties are involved in it. Does such language seem to be too strong? Look at the passage which stands at the head of this Chapter. The Church of Corinth, like all the early Christian communities, had a very large number of slaves in it—poor down-trodden creatures, whose sad experience of human tyranny and oppressiveness had made their hearts bound up within them, as Apostles and men of God proclaimed in their hearing a Master, in bearing whose easy yoke and light burden rest might be found by every weary and heavy-laden soul. The passage is a piece of St. Paul's counsel to these members of the Corinthian Church. He first advises men of every condition to abide in the condition wherein they were called or converted. The meaning of verse 20 is—"Whatever was your situation at the time when God brought home to your heart the Divine call to follow Jesus, remain in that situation still; do not change it for another." And this advice will hold good, he seems to say (such is the link of thought which joins on this verse to the succeeding), even where the situation in which you found itself at the time of your conversion is the most unfavourable and disadvantageous which it is possible to imagine. "Art thou called being a slave? care not for it" (one of the most eminent of living Greek scholars[1] gives us as his own version of these words, "In slavery wast thou called? *never mind*"); "but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather," that is, according to the interpretation which I accept and

[1] The Rev. Canon Evans, in *The Speaker's Commentary.*

believe to be the true one, "if the option of being made a freedman is given you, I would have you avail yourselves of it." I should add, however, that many eminent scholars think St. Paul's meaning to be the very reverse of this, and understand him to advise that, even if the option of being made free were given him, the slave would do better to remain a slave;[1] and, of course, if we are so to understand the words, it makes our present argument stronger—in that case, St. Paul recommends the slave to say, when offered by his master his freedom, what Moses contemplated a Hebrew bondservant's saying, and made provision for it, "I will not go away from thee, because I love thee and thine house, because I am well with thee."[2] But putting this aside, the advice to a converted slave not to mind or "care for" his being in a position so cruelly disadvantageous as that of slavery is quite enough for our present purpose. Heathen slavery was in many instances—might be in all cases, where the master chose to make it so—a horrible

[1] So Chrysostom. And so, among moderns, Conybeare and Howson, who, however, add, by way of explaining a counsel which must otherwise appear to be strange, "We must remember, with regard to this and other precepts here given, that they were given under the immediate anticipation of our Lord's coming." The Revised Version gives both renderings—"but if thou canst become free" in the text, "nay, even if thou canst become free" in the margin. While I myself have no doubt that the true meaning of the passage is that, if a slave has the option of becoming free, he should avail himself of it (Canon Evans's remark that both the *tense* of χρῆσαι, which is the aorist, and therefore "denotes not a continuance in the old state, but the assumption or adoption of something else," and its *sense*, which is "avail yourself of," seeming to me to determine the question conclusively, whatever may be the true rendering of εἰ καί), I suppose that, in deference to the great authorities on either side, and the evident hesitation of the Revisers of 1881, it ought to be admitted that the Greek is equivocal, and that accordingly either view of the Apostle's meaning may be taken.

[2] See Deut. xv. 16, and cf. Exod. xxi. 5, 6.

and galling tyranny. The slave was regarded as a chattel, as a piece of live property, over which the master had absolute and entirely irresponsible power, and whose life was held by the State in such small account that in Rome the ancient custom was, in cases where a single slave had murdered his master, to put to death the whole body of slaves, with their wives and children, who constituted the establishment.[1] Still, even in the condition of slavery there was ample verge and room enough, the Apostles tell us, to "serve the Lord Christ."[2] By submissive, prompt, and cheerful obedience to the earthly master, as representing the heavenly, "not with eyeservice as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,"[3] by giving a soft answer to rough and unmerited reprimands, and by the strictest and most punctilious honesty, the slave might "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour,"[4] might set it off and recommend it to the master as a good fruit, which could only come from a good tree. And even should the master remain "froward" still, proof against all efforts to please and serve him on the part of the slave, then it was open to the latter,

[1] See the account in Tacitus of the popular riot to which the proposal to act upon this barbarous old custom gave rise at Rome, when Pedanius Secundus, prefect of the city, had been murdered by one of his slaves. The question was submitted to the senate, who might perhaps have relented, had it not been for the speech of C. Cassius, who strongly recommended the maintenance of the ancient severity as the only safeguard of the lives of masters: "Every great example necessarily bears unjustly on certain cases; but the wrong to the individual is counterbalanced by the public advantage." Under this advice the senate resolved to let the law take its usual course; and the four hundred slaves of Pedanius's household, women and children included, were marched out to execution between files of soldiers posted along the road by Nero to keep the mob in order.—*Annales*, lib. xiv. cap. 42-45.

[2] See Col. iii. 24. [3] Eph. vi. 6. [4] Tit. ii. 10.

as St. Peter reminds him, to follow the Divine Master in the way of the Cross, which is the way of light and peace. "Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. . . . For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously."[1] A position, then, which thus gave room for the exercise of the highest Christian graces, and for the attainment of the highest Christian character, was not to be lightly thrown away and exchanged for another. "Abide in it," says St. Paul, "with God" on your side, or at least do not struggle to extricate yourselves from the yoke. As for the disadvantages and trials involved in the position, do not heed them. They can last but for a few years longer at most. "This I say, brethren, the time *is* short."[2] We are left here awhile by our merciful Father and loving Saviour, with a view to our being disciplined for a blessed eternity—that "glorious liberty of the children of God,"[3] where "the prisoners hear not the voice of the oppressor," and "the servant *is* free from his master."[4] The occasions which a slave's life offers for such a discipline are neither few

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 18, 20 *to* 24.
[2] Verse 29.
[3] See Rom. viii. 21.
[4] See Job iii. 18, 19.

nor inconsiderable. They will serve as well as any which more advantageous secular positions might furnish,—better than any other, if God's Providence appoints them for the slave. Bear the yoke, then, patiently, making no convulsive feverish efforts to throw it off. Regarding it as the yoke of the Divine Master, it shall give you rest, and ye shall bear it to the saving of your souls.—Such is the substance of the Apostle's advice to slaves in a free paraphrase.

The argument would be insufficiently illustrated from Holy Scripture, if I failed to glance at the counsel given by St. John the Baptist to the publicans and soldiers, which is exactly of a piece with that which St. Paul here gives to slaves. Tax-gathering under and for a foreign government has always been an odious trade, as giving occasion for extortion and oppressive exactions,—occasions which the tax-gatherers have not been slow to seize. The trade of a soldier has often in lawless times led to crimes of violence ; and war, even when conducted in the modern humane method, cannot fail to desolate human homes and hearts, and to bring much misery in its train. Yet when the tax-gatherers and soldiers asked St. John the Baptist what were the "fruits meet for repentance," which he would have them respectively bring forth, in neither case did he counsel them to quit their worldly calling. He did not say, "Cease to be tax-gatherers," or "Throw up the profession of arms altogether, and take to another business where there are fewer temptations," but merely, "Resist the temptations incidental to your pursuit, and be content with the remuneration which it holds out ; be good and

godly tax-gatherers, good and godly soldiers." "Exact no more than that which is appointed you;" "Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages."[1] This was precisely the same line of conduct which St. Paul and other Apostles laid down for slaves, and indeed for "all conditions of men," that they should retain the secular position in which the Gospel found them, only striving to serve God in it, as being His providential appointment for them.

But it is not only that any state of life, however disadvantageous in a secular point of view, and any duties, however commonplace, furnish abundant scope for the service of God, and for the discipline of Christian character;—they give openings also for the high and gracious communications which it pleases God, quite as often nowadays as under a dispensation of miracle, to make, not indeed to the senses, but to the spirit of man. It is surprising, when we come to reckon up the instances, how often it has pleased God to make to men magnificent revelations from heaven, not while they were secluding themselves for purposes of devotion, but while they were engaged in the commonplace, everyday duties of very humble callings. Moses receives his high commission by a Divine voice issuing from the burning bush, as he tends his father-in-law's flock on the skirts of Mount Horeb.[2] Gideon, as he threshes wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites, is greeted by the same Jehovah-Angel, and charged to deliver his people from the hand of their oppressors.[3] As

[1] St. Luke iii. 13, 14. [2] *See* Exod. iii. 1, 2, 10.
[3] *See* Judges vi. 11, 12, 14, 16.

David the shepherd boy followed the ewes great with young ones, God brought him to feed Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance.[1] Elisha was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and himself with the twelfth, when Elijah's mantle lighting upon his shoulders designated him as the successor of the great prophet.[2] The shepherds of Bethlehem were keeping watch over their flocks by night, as the dark sky overhead became ablaze with light, and a full choir of angels gave glory to God in their hearing for the birth of the Redeemer, and for the sure augury which it afforded of "peace on earth, goodwill toward men."[3] The wise men of the east were engaged in their usual pursuit of studying the midnight firmament, when a new jewel on the brow of night shines out with unwonted lustre, and apprises them of the event which angels had heralded to the shepherds.[4] Peter and Andrew are casting a net into the sea, James and John mending their nets, when God Incarnate passes by and calls them to be fishers of men.[5] St. Matthew is entering the payment of tribute in his ledger when the same Lord, passing by, calls him also to be an apostle.[6] What abundant pains has God taken to impress upon us that there is no necessity for changing our present pursuit, if only it be an honest one, in order that He may hold communion with us and reveal Himself in love and grace to our souls,—that

> "We need not bid for cloistered cell
> Our neighbour and our work farewell,"[7]—

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[1] *See* Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71, with 2 Sam. v. 2.
[2] *See* 1 Kings xix. 19, 20, 21.
[3] *See* St. Luke ii. 8 *to* 15.
[4] *See* St. Matt. ii. 1, 2.
[5] *See* St. Matt. iv. 18 *to* 23.
[6] *See* St. Matt. ix. 9.
[7] *Christian Year.* "Morning."

that in the oft-trodden pathway of our ordinary duties (be they as secular, be there as little of heaven in them, as there was in the pursuit of Matthew the publican) we may indeed hear his voice speaking to our inmost spirits, directing, illuminating, stimulating, soothing, consoling us, as clearly as if we were in our secret chamber with closed doors, and our Bible open before us. Only let the work be done "as to the Lord, and not unto men," under his eye, with his help, and as the appointed taskwork in which we may approve ourselves to Him, and that spirit thrown into it qualifies it to be the vehicle of Divine communications to the soul.

The first and fundamental counsel, then, which has to be given to all Christians desirous of serving and pleasing God, and of being and doing what He would have them be and do, is that, as to their station, and worldly environment, they should bide where they are, applying themselves to a conscientious discharge of the duties of their position, and a surmounting of the temptations incident to it. But oh! the disappointment to many among us of a counsel so utterly commonplace and homely, so entirely out of keeping with the whole tone and tendencies of social life in the last quarter of the nineteenth century! We feel like Naaman of old, who had expected that the prophet would observe a solemn parade, and recite a solemn form in curing him, or at least would send him to where his native Abana rolled down its golden sands, and arrowy Pharpar rushed along with impetuous haste towards the sea; but was bitterly chagrined when simply bidden to go and dip himself seven times in Jordan,—Jordan with

its low-lying sunken chasm, and with its narrow, clay-coloured stream.[1] For it is just the vice of our present system,—a vice brought about by the agencies of what is boastfully called our high civilisation,—that no man or woman is content to stay where he is, that every one seems to think himself placed here to struggle, compete, push his way upwards. We educate the children of the poor far above their station, and we are punished by finding that no one in a lower social grade, though born to it, and placed in it by God's Providence, is contented to abide in it. Apostles of old counselled even slaves, notwithstanding the galling tyranny to which many of them were subjected, not to be anxious for emancipation, not to struggle or fight for it. We have no slaves (thank God for it), but only voluntary servants, under the protection of the same laws as their masters, and free to depart from service when they please. But though there are no hardships in modern service, and indeed in good families many great advantages, no servant can be induced to keep his place long; the old-fashioned domestic—the Deborah of Jacob's household,[2]—who tied herself for life to the family of the master, took a pride in the children as if they were her own, and was honoured and tended by them all in old age and sickness, this class of servant, though some of them linger amongst us still, is fast becoming extinct. But though the passage before us leads me to speak particularly of servants, the vice in question is by no means peculiar to them; and perhaps characterizes them even less than other classes of society. The whole of life in

[1] *See* 2 Kings v. 9 *to* 13. [2] *See* Gen. xxxv. 8, and xxiv. 59.

every class has become a struggle to be something we are not—the contradiction this, as Christ's ministers are bound to warn His people, of the fundamental principle of the service of God. The well-to-do man must become very rich, must accumulate far more than is necessary to provide for those dependent upon him in a manner suitable to the station in which they were born,—he must become forsooth one of the monied,—why not, he says to himself, one of the titled—aristocracy—a baronet—nay, might it not be even a baron? If he knows his Bible, I wonder that text does not haunt him; "He that maketh haste to be rich shall not"—*cannot*—"be innocent."[1]

But it is in the spiritual life (because this is the highest of all forms of life, and Satan ever aims at corrupting the most precious things of God) that the restless tendency to change of position most deplorably manifests itself. A young lady, as yet unmarried, sincerely desires to be good and to do good. As if there were no scope for being good and doing good at home, she joins a sisterhood, or makes arrangements in some other way to live apart from her family. I am not disparaging sisterhoods; they are a new development of the system of the English Church, showing how much life and vitality there still is in the old weather-beaten tree; and I do not doubt, either that under strict episcopal control and inspection they may do and are doing much good, or that there are women, chiefly of a certain age and without ties, whose real vocation is to a sisterhood. But undoubtedly many young women of the best intentions are drawn to join sisterhoods who, judging

[1] Prov. xxviii. 20.

from their circumstances, have no real vocation whatever for such a life. And their joining the sisterhood is only a form of self-choosing and self-pleasing disguised under the plausible pretext, which is really and truly *one* of their motives, of a wish to do good. The honest truth is, that there are many trials of temper at home, many rubs, much friction —how delightful to be out of the reach of them all, always ministering to the Lord in the sick and infirm members of His body, devoting one's whole life to the poor! But perchance thou hast a sick father or mother at home, who needs nursing, and soothing, and reading, and praying with, quite as much as the poor people in the hospital, for which the sisterhood you contemplate joining provides nurses. "True; but father and mother are so cross, so peevish, so irritable,—they look upon attendance and nursing, too, not as a favour, but as a thing one is bound by the Fifth Commandment to do; and as for brothers and sisters, well—they are very good at a distance to correspond with now and then, but only 'distance' —and nothing else—'can lend enchantment to the view' of them; go and live side by side with them in the same establishment, and you will soon find how many rough edges they have, and how continually in the course of the day they are thwarting and rubbing up against you. In the sisterhood I shall escape all these trials, and live, as I long to do, a life of prayer and good works, and win the blessings of the poor sick folk, and the commendations of the superior and the community. True,—the dress that I shall have to wear is a little sombre, but then —well, I am young still, and it will not be unbe-

coming." If in the mind of any of my readers any train of thought and self-communing at all like this has ever found place, I do not know that I can do them a much greater service than by asking them to read the late Professor Mozley's sermon (in his volume of *University Sermons*) on "Our Duty to Equals"—truly one of the greatest discourses of the present century, in which it is shown how far more trying (and therefore demanding a larger grace) are our duties to those who are on a level with us in station, abilities, and attainments, than to those who are below us. Oh, "how much harder it is," says the Professor, "to be fair to an equal than ever so generous to an inferior!"

The summary of all that has been said as to the sphere in which God would have us do Him service, —the first question this for those who are conscious that the inward call to follow their Saviour has been made to their heart and spirit,—is contained in the apostolic counsel which stands at the head of the Chapter; "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." The earthly vocation, being providentially ordered and arranged, will do no prejudice to the heavenly one. Rather, if accepted and rightly pursued, it will further the higher calling. Doubtless there are exceptions to this and to every general rule, exceptions which I believe the Apostle glances at in the clause, "But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather." But the Scriptural *rule* is beyond a doubt—"Seek no change of earthly condition; bide where you are, as God's appointed sphere of discipline for your character, conscientiously

meeting the responsibilities, and doing the duties, and surmounting by grace the trials, incidental to your position."

Ah! blessed Lord Jesus, Divine Master in the way of the Cross, we would be for ever choosing our own crosses, not meekly bearing after Thee those which Thou choosest for us, and layest upon us in the order of thy good and wise Providence. We would have great crosses forsooth, romantic crosses, picturesque crosses; and lo, Thou sayest, "No, my child, it is the small crosses, the prosaic crosses, the homely crosses, the vulgar crosses, those trials of temper, those mortifications of petty vanity, of indolence, and love of ease, wherein thou must be conformed by the discipline of my Spirit to mine image. Those crosses, and not others, do thou take up daily and bear after Me. Is not my choice for thee much better than thine for thyself? Is it not a wise choice? Is it not a loving choice?" Be it so, Lord. Precious indeed, above thousands of gold and silver, must be the cross which Thou choosest for me as the fittest, and which Thou dost lovingly adapt to my strength and powers of endurance! Truly, as Thou sayest, such a cross is an easy yoke and a light burden, in the bearing of which I may find rest unto my soul. Therefore, dear Lord, lead Thou on with Thy grand Cross going before, and I, now come by Thy grace to a right mind, will follow after with my little, humble, commonplace one.

"I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on."

CHAPTER II

TRUTH IN THE INWARD PARTS THE FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT

"But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts."—PSALM li. pt. of 6 P.B.V.

THE fifty-first Psalm, according to its title, and the view commonly taken of it, is the expression of David's penitence after his double sin of adultery and murder. We are to remember, however, what is sometimes overlooked in estimating David's spiritual position at the time of writing the Psalm, that he had continued in impenitence for many months. It was on the occasion of Nathan the prophet's coming to him, to denounce his sin and pronounce God's sentence upon him, that he composed this Psalm. But we know from the history that Nathan came to him after the birth of Bathsheba's child, because the death of the child was announced as part of the king's punishment. The better part of a year therefore must have elapsed between the sin and the deep repentance for it, of which this Psalm is the expression. What was David doing all that time? The history preserves an entire and almost tantalizing silence respecting him. Our only too familiar ex-

perience of sin unrepented of,—never honestly faced, never dragged out to the light of God's countenance, confessed, and renounced, must fill up the gap in the history. David was playing tricks with his conscience. In outward conduct and observances probably things went much as usual with him, so that there was little or nothing to record. He heard and settled the causes which were referred to him as chief magistrate; he received petitions addressed to the throne, and considered of them; he went up to the temple to worship; he endeavoured in the ordinary departments of duty (for the sequel shows that the life of grace was not altogether extinct within him, and he himself prays in this very Psalm, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me,"—how can that be taken from a man which he does not possess?) to conform himself to the precepts of the law. "I understand," says John Calvin, a divine who, though wanting in poetical power, had a shrewd insight both into human character and into the deeper things of the spiritual life,—two chief qualifications for expounding the Psalms,—"that David was not destitute of all fear of God, but only blinded in one respect, so that he lulled to sleep his sense of God's anger by perverse flatteries." Yes, perverse flatteries, dictated by that corruption of the heart which we all share with David, and which enables us therefore to understand what the flatteries were like. After all, was it not the commonest thing in the world for Oriental despots (and David was an Oriental despot) to send for any woman they pleased to be an inmate of their seraglio, and to get rid of any man who stood in their light by craft or violence or both? "This is all I have done," David would

think,—"what the sovereigns around me do every day of their lives without scruple and without reproach." And as to God's Law, which so emphatically denounced what he had done, might he not, would he not, make amends both to God and his subjects by being a very good ruler in future, most strict in his administration of justice, most upright in his protection of innocence and in throwing his shield over the oppressed;—the rich man who took the poor man's little ewe lamb and dressed it for the wayfaring man that was come to him, should he not smart for it, when he was brought before David's judgment-seat?[1] The "perverse flatteries" of self-love had so lulled David's conscience to sleep that he did not the least recognise his own picture in that parable of Nathan's, while it was being recited to him,—never for an instant made the reflexion that his own conduct had been ten thousand times more wicked, hard-hearted, and oppressive than that of the rich man. All those months he had been hushing up his sin as well as he could, endeavouring possibly to divert the thoughts of his people to other subjects, (foreign policy, perhaps, and the war with the Ammonites,[2]) hushing it up, too, "in the inward parts," silencing his own conscience when it remonstrated, and keeping a sore rankling deep within. And the result was, as it always will be in such cases, and the more so in proportion to the spirituality of the sufferer's mind,—a wretched restlessness. Listen to the accents of his misery in Psalm xxxii., which also probably refers to this occasion: "While I held my

[1] *See* 2 Sam. xii. 1-7.
[2] *See* 2 Sam. xi. 1; 1 Chron. xx. 1.

tongue" (so long as I did not confess my sin, drag it out from the recesses of my conscience into the light, and condemn myself for it before God whom I had displeased, and man whom I had scandalized): "my bones consumed away through my daily complaining. For thy hand is heavy upon me day and night: and my moisture is like the drought in summer"[1] (there was such a hard, dry, stiff, formal life in the inner man all those months, so unlike the constant play and gush of spiritual emotions in his earlier and better days). But the Holy Ghost, who had never entirely forsaken him, co-operating with the words, "Thou art the man," struck conviction to his heart in a moment of time, and placed before him a full-length portrait of himself, as he really stood before God, in all the defilement and enormity of his guilt. No more tricks with his conscience after that, no more secret rankling sores, no more falsehoods, no more flatteries! David has regained that "truth in the inward parts," which God requires in all his servants. "I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord."[2] He did so in the simplest, briefest language—"I have sinned against the Lord." And the effect upon the Divine mind (for ever blessed be the pardoning love of God) was as instantaneous as that upon David's mind had been. The next moment the prophet's word of absolution dropped like healing balm upon the wounds of his conscience, "The LORD also hath put away thy sin" (laid the heavy load of it upon that Lamb of God, who was slain, in the counsels of eternity, from the foundation of the world, and of whose sacrifice in time glorious

[1] Verses 3, 4. P.B.V. [2] Verse 6.

glimpses had been opened to David by the Spirit of prophecy); "thou shalt not die."[1] "I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord," sang he afterwards in recording this great crisis of his spiritual life; "and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." But though the aspect of his sin as an offence against God seemed to absorb every other aspect of it ("against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight"),[2] yet he must have felt that it had been sin of the most aggravated kind against man also. Therefore David must himself avow to his subjects, whom his offences had so greatly scandalized, both his sin and his humiliation before God on account of it. His method of doing so is by writing this Psalm, as the utterance of a contrite heart, and handing it over to the precentor to be set to music and sung in the temple as a lasting memento of his guilt and his penitence. Thus he would edify those he had scandalized, and guide them too in their repentance, according to his own avowed design in verse 13, "Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto thee." And oh! how many thousands of penitents has David helped and guided thus! To how many and and many a soul has this Psalm lent wings, in its upward flight of penitence towards the bosom of the heavenly Father! Such is God's alchemy, by which He draws good out of evil, and from the worst and blackest sins extracts edification for his Church.

You who sincerely desire to serve and please God, the first question which you have to consider,

[1] 2 Sam. xii. 13. [2] Psalm li. 4.

in order that the spiritual life may in you rest upon a solid foundation, is whether you possess that "truth in the inward parts," which is His first and most fundamental requirement.

(1) And first, *truth as regards your past.* There are many of my readers probably whom this counsel does not touch. While they are conscious of many and great failures, these are more or less failures of infirmity and indeliberation, sins of temper and of the tongue, into which they were hurried from want of watchfulness, and in the warmth of animated conversation. But some, it is only too probable, may be conscious of sins much greater than these; they have a guilty secret; there is a real burden upon the conscience, a sore it may be, which has gone on rankling and festering there for years, and respecting which their soul knows well that they have never been thoroughly candid with God, their neighbour, or themselves. Such candour, as their conscience probably has often told them, is essential to peace, and not only that, it is the indispensable preliminary to the whole-hearted service which God requires from them, and which alone He will accept. Wherever man has been scandalized and injured by our sin, we must aim at making the avowal of it, and reparation for it, as public as the scandal was; and even where it has been quite a bosom sin, which has never transpired, and the chief source of our uneasiness in respect of it is that the world takes us outwardly for persons so much better than we are, great relief will be found oftentimes in following the judicious advice given in our Communion Service, and "opening our grief" quite unreservedly, and with as

much openness as we should use with God Himself, from whom we can hide nothing, to "some discreet and learned Minister of God's Word," that we may receive from him, just as David from Nathan, "the benefit of absolution," together with such "ghostly counsel and advice" as he, acting in his Master's name and for his Master, may see to be expedient for us.[1] To obviate misunderstanding of my meaning, I will just add that such confession as is here recommended is, in point of principle, as different as possible from confession resorted to, as a normal practice of the spiritual life, by persons in any and every spiritual condition. This latter practice would probably do harm rather than good—would debilitate the soul by rendering it incapable to stand and walk alone, and by throwing it for guidance and light and help rather on the human minister, than upon Him to whom it is the province of all human ministry to direct the eyes of our minds and hearts.

(2) But *truth as regards our future*, truth as regards the service of God, which I am supposing that my reader wishes to undertake, and for which I am designing to furnish helps, is no less essential than the true avowal, before God and (where called for) before man, of an unworthy and guilty past. And I know not how better to describe this truth than by calling it a sincere and cordial willingness to be, and to do, and to suffer whatsoever God would have us be, and do, and suffer. *To be what He would have us be.* We may be very far indeed from this at present; but are we cordially willing to be made by grace

[1] Exhortation on the Sunday or Holy-day immediately preceding the celebration of the Holy Communion. [Last paragraph.]

other than we are—to be made saints, for that it is, and nothing less than that, which God will make us, if we yield ourselves up to his manipulation, and allow Him to handle and mould us just as He pleases? Do you flinch? Do you say secretly in the inward parts; "I should be right glad to be put on good terms with my conscience, and to be an exemplary man or woman of the world, looked up to and held in high esteem by a large circle of relations and friends; but *a saint*,—will not that involve great sacrifices and much strictness of life?" Ah, that is not "truth in the inward parts," that is not whole-heartedness with God! *To do whatever God would have us do.* If the things He would have us to do should be distasteful, and not according to our natural bent—the doing little kind offices perhaps for persons not very sympathetic or grateful; the punctual fulfilment of small domestic charities never known to the world, and for which we get no credit; the doing the drudgery of some really good and philanthropic work, leaving to others all the parade part of it, the complimenting and the speech-making—are we prepared for this, if God should indicate it to us in the order of his Providence? Or is this too much for us? Do we wish to choose for ourselves the tasks which we will do for God, and to please ourselves in the doing of them? Oh, then, this is not "truth in the inward parts!" Finally, *to suffer whatever God would have us suffer.* Oh, arduous requirement! Are we perfectly, cordially willing that the Divine Master should choose the cross for us, and lay it upon us, well assured that his choice will be guided by infinite wisdom and infinite love, and that He will

"not suffer us to be tried above that we are able, but will with the trial also make a way for us to escape, that we may be able to bear it"?[1] The cross of his choosing may be a crushing bereavement; will be that probably, if He, the Jealous One, sees that we are making an idol of some one in our domestic circle. Or it may be something as trifling as those trials of temper, and mortifications of vanity, which are involved in daily life in the world. Great or small, are we cordially willing to bear after Him whatever cross the Divine Master selects and fixes to our shoulders? Or are we for saying, "Do not try me thus, Lord! I do not feel that I could go without this or that, endure this or that, at present"? Or perhaps, "I am prepared for duty, Lord; nay, for hard work in Thy service; but suffering I would fain decline; give me a crown of flowers, not a crown of thorns"? And art thou then "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," if thou canst not consent to "endure hardness"?[2] If He, the Captain of thy salvation, submitted to be made perfect through sufferings, wouldst thou fain be made perfect in some other way? That, again, is not "truth in the inward parts."

But it being my design in this work to eschew generalities, and to come as much home as possible to the business and bosoms of my readers, I will suggest one or two critical points in which a man's intention of surrendering himself to God may be found defective and wanting in whole-heartedness. First, how does he deal with his money? Is he willing to put this as well as himself absolutely under God's control? Is he willing *to see*,—not to hope or to

[1] *See* 1 Cor. x. 13. [2] *See* 2 Tim. ii. 3.

trust, but *to see* that God has his full share of the money for works of charity, piety, and kindness? Is he willing to give on system and principle, knowing what he gives? Or, because he feels that there is a weak point here which will not bear much probing, does he satisfy himself with thinking that he uniformly gives something at a charity sermon, and subscribes quite as much to the charitable institutions of his neighbourhood as those in the same station of life with himself? There is a wide difference between giving in this vague indeterminate way, which settles nothing as to claims and liabilities, and regarding the disposal of one's means as a solemn matter between God and the conscience. Are we prepared henceforth so to regard it? "Lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts."—Again; the government of the tongue, being an exceedingly laborious and difficult department of duty, especially for persons endowed by nature with vivacity and humour, is an exercise very likely to be declined—not declined in so many words, of course, but evaded by those who propose to themselves to undertake God's service. "To keep my tongue" resolutely "from all evil speaking, lying, and slandering;"[1] not to allow myself in any unkind or censorious remarks; to keep silence altogether, when we feel that too much talk about trifles is really unnerving us and wasting our spiritual strength; and, more than all, to try to give the conversation an adroit turn in a useful direction, when it seems to be running to seed—all this is so extremely difficult, and so few even of the best Christians succeed in doing it thoroughly, that it is very easy, almost un-

[1] Church Catechism ("My duty towards my neighbour").

consciously, to let down our standard in this quarter, and more or less explicitly to harbour the thought that, if only our conduct is correct, our words may be left to take care of themselves. But, in view of what our Lord says of idle words,[1] and of what his Apostle St. James says about the tongue being the key of the whole spiritual position ("If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body"),[2] it is quite impossible for those who accept the Christian Scriptures as a rule of life to regard the government of the tongue otherwise than as a spiritual exercise of the highest importance. The question, therefore, for those who would serve and please God is, whether they are cordially willing to exercise that constant watchfulness over themselves, which the government of the tongue implies. Will they endeavour, and do they really intend, to do their best in this particular sphere of the spiritual life? Progress will be slow at best, and there will be failures, and checks, and mistakes without end, at all events in the earlier stages of the course; but is the will right as regards this matter; the purpose of the heart true and unswerving? "Lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts."—But to sum up all particulars under one comprehensive head (leaving other details to be thought out by the reader), the great defect in the spiritual and moral life of every nine men out of ten is that there is in it far too little of the element of self-discipline, self-denial, self-control. The life, without perhaps being at all vicious, is much too easy to sit well upon one who is a "good soldier of Jesus Christ," and as such bound

[1] *See* St. Matt. xii. 36, 37. [2] James iii. 2.

to "endure hardness." "We wrestle," writes the Apostle, in describing the Christian life, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers,"[1] and so forth. But the life of the ordinary average Christian, however blameless and without reproach, is anything but a wrestling-match —it is rather the languid, listless course of a man embarked on a river in a golden summer evening, who, yielding himself up to the enjoyment of the beautiful scenery and the balmy weather, lays down his oars and allows himself to drop down the stream. He lays no restraint, or next to none, upon his tongue, his temper, his amusements; never denies himself for his soul's health in bodily appetite, or in sleep, or in that very important branch of duty, the management of his time. Abundantly willing to be saved by the Cross, and pleased at all times to hear of its saving efficacy, he is yet not willing to bear the Cross. Now, under these antecedent moral conditions, it is hopeless to think of serving and pleasing God. He indeed is prepared to bestow upon us every blessing in His rich treasury ("The LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will He withhold from them that walk uprightly"),[2] but it is on the understanding that we give Him *our* all, as freely as He gives us *his*. His "yoke is indeed easy, "and his burden light,"[3] but a yoke it is, and a burden it is, and there is no other way of finding rest to the soul than in taking it upon us. To win Christ and to be found in Him is indeed a pearl of great price; but the merchantman who covets it must win it, as St.

[1] Eph. vi. 12. [2] Psalm lxxxiv. 11.
[3] *See* St. Matt. xi. 30.

Paul did, by selling all that he had to buy it.[1] The selling all that we have, a sacrifice which had to be literally made in the case of the primitive believers, is in our case nothing else than the cordial surrender to God of "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto"[2] Him—the pointing of the needle of our intention quite truly to the pole of his will. It only remains to say that the stamina of character involved in this attitude of the will are not a natural gift, but a special grace, and one which, if you are conscious that you have it not at present, may be reached by prayer. Therefore work in us, O Lord, "both to will and do of thy good pleasure."[3] "Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power"[4] to be, and to do, and to suffer whatsoever Thou wouldst have them. Since Thou requirest truth in the inward parts, give that which Thou requirest, and then require what Thou wilt. *Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis.*[5]

[1] *See* St. Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

[2] First Post-Communion Prayer in "The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion."

[3] *See* Phil. ii. 13.

[4] Psalm cx. 3.

[5] Augustine. "Let us remember that He Himself who saith, *A new heart will I give you* (Ezek. xxxvi. 26) saith also, *Make you a new heart* (xviii. 31). How is this? Why doth He bid us make ourselves a new heart, if He Himself will give one? Why doth He give, if man is to make, unless it be that he gives what he enjoins, when he helps him, upon whom he lays the injunction, to make?" [*Liber de Gratiâ et Libero Arbitrio.*]

CHAPTER III

THE GUIDANCE OF THE EYE

I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.—PSALM xxxii. 8, 9.

WE are endeavouring, the reader will remember, to give some helpful instructions to that large class of persons who are desirous of serving and pleasing God, but need definite and systematic guidance. The first instruction was that they should abide in that station of life in which God has placed them, accounting the duties and trials which it offers as His appointed sphere of discipline for their characters. The second was, that they should offer themselves for the service of God with "truth in the inward parts," a thorough integrity of heart and purpose, a cordial willingness (as we ventured to define it) to be, and to do, and to suffer whatsoever He would have us be, and do, and suffer. The next point for our consideration is the guidance that God will give to those who embark thus cordially on his service,—the guidance which such persons must constantly look for, and may expect to find. But I must preface

what I have to say with an emphatic warning that this guidance is only to be had by those single-hearted persons who are "true to God in the inward parts," that is, who have yielded themselves up to Him in complete self-surrender. Reserves in dealing with God ("Do not make me this," or, "Do not bid me do this," or, "Do not put this upon me"), reserves, I say, in proportion as they are allowed, and give a complexion to the will, shut us out from this heavenly guidance. It is not until Saul, having done with kicking against the pricks (the pricks being the internal remonstrances and convictions, which the sight of Stephen's martyrdom had wrought in him), submits himself to the heavenly herdsman with the words, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"[1] — it is not until he is brought into this attitude of soul that the Lord indicates to him what he must do. God's finger does not point to the road, until He sees that we are fully prepared to walk in it. It is assumed, then, that readers of this Chapter have, in pursuance of the advice given in the foregoing, ascertained by self-examination the unreserved cordiality of their surrender to God, this being the necessary preliminary of further steps.

It will be expedient, before explaining what the guidance of God's eye is, to consider what it is that makes guidance of this kind necessary for the Christian. God may be said to have three modes of guidance for his people,—with the hand, with the mouth, and with the eye. He *guides them with the hand* by his Providence, when that Providence places them in certain positions, or at least opens

[1] *See* Acts ix. 5, 6.

out certain positions before them, or when it ordains for them certain events, or throws them across certain persons, or surrounds them with certain circumstances, which were none of their own seeking. He *guides them with the mouth* by the Holy Scriptures, those "lively oracles,"[1] in listening to which with devout reverence, and fervent prayer for Divine teaching, we may hear his voice. And lastly, He *guides them with his eye.* We are speaking now more particularly of guidance as to what God would have us to be and to do; for as to what He would have us to suffer, we have no part to play there beyond the cordial acceptance of his will; He lays suffering upon us, independently of any agency of our own, when and how He sees fit. But in reference to the guidance of our conduct, and the cultivation of graces of character, it may be asked why we want more guidance than that which we already possess in our Bible,—why the voice of God, speaking through the "lively oracles," should not be all that we need? The answer is that the New Testament nowhere gives rules, but only principles, of duty for our guidance, and that the right adjustment of these principles to particular cases as they arise is not to be found in the New Testament itself, and must therefore be sought elsewhere. One or two simple examples will best show what is meant. Our Lord's rule for almsgiving is secrecy,—that the relief given to others shall not be allowed to transpire: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, *to be seen of them.*" . . . "When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that

[1] *See* Acts vii. 38.

thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."[1] But this is a principle, the application of which in practice has to be checked by other principles, equally Scriptural, nay equally enjoined by the Divine Master Himself. "Let your light so shine before men," says He, "*that they may see your good works*, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"[2] (we are not to do the works "*that they may be seen of men*," that is, with the view of getting credit for them ourselves,—that motive is absolutely cut off and forbidden; but, on the other hand, the doing them *so that they may be seen*, with a view to God's reaping glory from them, is actually prescribed). Now in view of both these great principles of duty, equally divine, equally propounded by God, how am I to act in a particular case? I wish to know what God would have me to do in respect of this large sum of money, which I think of giving to some good object. Am I to let my name be known, by way of setting a good example, or to conceal my name, with a view to mortifying in myself that secret vanity, which has its roots so quick in the hearts of all of us? The Holy Scriptures leave me to myself here, give no answer to the question. Where, then, am I to look for guidance?—Again: the New Testament does not anywhere prescribe any set times for prayer; these are left to the conscience of the individual Christian, the principle, however, being announced that prayer is to be the atmosphere in which the disciple of Christ should live and move and have his being;—"Pray without ceasing."[3] It is natural and reasonable to

[1] St. Matt. vi. 1, 3, 4. [2] St. Matt. v. 16. [3] 1 Thess. v. 17.

pray, as most people do, on rising and retiring to rest, and natural and reasonable also to add to these two periods the noonday, as the Psalmist did ("Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud"[1]); yet these periods are never actually prescribed in Scripture, and therefore Christians must have been led to adopt them by some other guidance than that which the Word of God supplies. What was that guidance?—Another instance. Our Lord has taught us in that great sermon of his, in which He announces all the principles of Christian duty, that we should not resist evil, but submit meekly to every species of ill-usage. His language is, according to his wont, as strong as it is possible to make it: 'But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also."[2] Some two-and-twenty years after this precept of non-resistance to evil usage had been given by Christ, his Apostle St. Paul was scourged, imprisoned, and put in the stocks at Philippi for performing a most beneficent miracle on a poor possessed girl; and when next morning the magistrates who had ordered these severities relented (thinking, as they well might, that the punishment had been in excess of the offence) and sent to the prison an order for the discharge of the Apostle and his friend, St. Paul does not so construe his Master's precept as if he were to accept unresistingly and without protest the invasion of his rights as a Roman citizen; he shows what is called spirit; will not leave

[1] Psalm lv. 17. [2] St. Matt. v. 39, 40.

the city without an apology, nay, without a humble request not to disturb the public peace any more by his presence and preaching: "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out."[1] Was St. Paul acting rightly in insisting upon an apology for the violation of his rights as a Roman citizen? Or, on the other hand, was he resisting evil, and declining to turn the left cheek to him who had smitten him on the right, as his Master had bidden him do? Rightly, there can scarcely be a doubt; for it must be remembered that the Master's example, no less than his precept, is our guide; and He Himself, when stricken unjustly at the high priest's tribunal, remonstrated with him who struck Him, and showed him how unreasonable his conduct had been.[2] But how was St. Paul guided to see that he was to act on this occasion rather in the spirit of his Master's example, than by the letter of his Master's precept? On another trying occasion he allowed himself to speak from temper, forgetting alike both the example and the precept of the Master, and saying to the high priest, "God shall smite thee, *thou* whited wall";[3] but in the present case his conduct seems to have been irreproachable. By what guidance was he led to adopt it? In a word, in acting out all those broad precepts of the Sermon on the Mount ("Give to every man that asketh of thee";[4] "Swear not at all";[5] "Take no thought for your life,"[6] and so forth), precepts which

[1] Acts xvi. 37. [2] *See* St. John xviii. 22, 23. [3] Acts xxiii. 3.
[4] St. Luke vi. 30. [5] St. Matt. v. 34. [6] St. Matt. vi. 25.

reason seems to teach us must be often modified in applying them to practice, by what guidance is our line of action to be determined in a particular case? The answer is, by the guidance of God's eye, which He bestows wherever He finds a tender conscience, and a guileless soul with no prepossessions of the will.

Now this guidance of God's eye is (in plain unmetaphorical language) nothing else than the secret movement of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, in answer to the soul's sincere petition that wisdom may be granted it to discern the right path. If the petition be not vitiated by some prepossession of the will, if the will swing quite loose on its pivot, only seeking to know God's will in the particular case, in order that it may do it, the direction will not be long in coming—"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left."[1] And it is this guidance of the Holy Spirit in the conscience, as to the right settlement of all questions of duty in particular cases, which St. Paul asks for his converts in such passages as the following:—"We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing."[2] "Filled with the knowledge of his will"? But the Colossians must have known perfectly well all the great principles of Christian duty; even before the circulation of the Christian Scriptures all those principles must have been instilled into their minds by the preaching of

[1] Isaiah xxx. 21. [2] Col. i. 9, 10.

the Apostle. What they needed was the knowledge of God's will in particular cases, spiritual discernment to see the right application of the principles in the conduct of daily life, and in the ever new combinations of circumstances to which daily life in the world gives rise.

How beautiful, and how helpful towards the understanding of the thing intended, is the name given in the thirty-second Psalm to this guidance of the Holy Spirit in the souls and consciences of God's people; "I will guide thee with mine eye." The mother's guardianship of her children is exercised very much by means of the eye. They are around her in the room, engaged in their tasks or their play; but they feel that her eye is upon them. She need not always speak; she makes clear to them her meaning and her wishes by a glance. One of them is in the neighbourhood of danger,—near the fire, or the open window; she looks up from her work, and her eye speaks caution. They make progress in their tasks, or show intelligence,—her eye indicates approval. They dispute or loiter where they should be industrious,—her eye betokens displeasure. Some tumble or trifling accident befalls one of them,—her eye expresses alarm, concern, or compassion. And the effect of a glance is enough. It stimulates them to diligence, or warns them back from danger, or consoles them under pain, or brings them to her knee in a burst of childish sorrow. Now the mother's relationship to her children (not the father's only, but the mother's) is made in Holy Scripture an emblem of God's relationship to His people: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should

not have compassion on the son of her womb?" (Where shall we find a stony-hearted mother? Well, there are such women; but they are monsters, not mothers); "yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."[1] All and more than all the tender and watchful guardianship which human parents bestow upon their children, God bestows upon the individual members of his Church,—I say upon her individual members, because while the guidance of God's voice —of the living oracles of Scripture—is for the Church in general, this guidance of the eye is essentially individual in its character; its sphere of operation is the individual conscience; it is as if God the director, and the soul which is directed, were alone in the world; as if the Heavenly Father had none other to think of or care for but that one soul only—"Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget *thee*."

Such then is the guidance of the eye, which God promises to bestow upon all those whose surrender of the will to Him is unreserved and whole-hearted. But what of the rest? What of those who, while having a general desire to serve and please God, are not yet prepared to go all lengths with Him, plead for some Zoar to be spared to them,—if not for some sinful indulgence, yet for some creature idol,—would fain postpone to a more convenient season the surrender of their entire will to God, to be and to do and to suffer as He would have them? Meantime they would deprecate very earnestly being let alone by God; they would cry with the Psalmist from the very depth of their soul, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me";[2] as a fact, they have much in common

[1] Isaiah xlix. 15. [2] Psalm li. 11.

with the saints now; and they would fain be found among the saints eventually. Well, there is an alternative guidance provided for such persons; but God dissuades them from it; and in prudence, and in consideration for themselves, they ought to deprecate it. They may be saved doubtless; but, until the surrender of the will is absolute and unreserved, it will be through the heavenly Father's sterner discipline, through pangs of sorrow, and trials, and heart-aches. "Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding, whose mouths must be held in with bit and bridle." The soul which will not that God should leave it to itself, and yet will as yet (at all events, in some corners of the will) be intractable, must be rendered tractable as horse and mule are, by bit and bridle. Manasseh, one of the wickedest men that ever walked the earth, yet that in him God might show forth all long-suffering (so that none might despair), was to be brought back in true penitence to the bosom of God, and recovered from the abyss of crime into which he had plunged himself. But this could not be without the discipline of affliction; so stubborn a spirit could not be tamed without the bit. "The LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they did not hearken. Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon." And the bit subjugated him who would not be obedient to the voice and the eye. "When he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed

unto him : and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he *was* God."[1] Nebuchadnezzar, puffed up with pride by his achievements, challenged and received a stern correction of his haughtiness. He was visited by a stroke upon his reason, and reduced for a stated period to the level of the beasts that perish ; and not until he had been duly debased did his understanding return to him. Then the bit having done its work, the haughty monarch was subdued, and he " blessed the most High " and praised and honoured Him, making the humble acknowledgment that " those that walk in pride he is able to abase."[2] Sennacherib, on the other hand, and Balaam are Scriptural instances of men upon whom the bit and bridle were laid, who felt the restraint of it, and were turned back by it from a wicked purpose ; but, because grace did not accompany the discipline, were merely corrected, not converted,[3]— the will being laid under constraint, but not really carried.

These and similar figures are exhibited in the Scriptural narrative in bold relief and strong colouring ; yet what we read of them is " written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."[4] However commonplace may be our experiences and trials in comparison with those of such giants of depravity, or of virtue, as the Scripture portrays, we may be sure that God deals with men now

[1] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, 11, 12, 13. [2] *See* Dan. iv.
[3] *See* 2 Kings xix. 35, 36, 37, and Num. xxxi. 8, Joshua xiii. 22.
[4] *See* 1 Cor. x. 11.

on precisely the same principles, and with precisely the same ends, as he did of old. Where He finds a heart not wholly his at present, and yet through his grace not willing to be altogether separated from Him, He uses the discipline of the bit and bridle, till the soul is made docile enough to be guided thenceforth by the eye. It matters not in what form the discipline comes; it may come in a form as unlike as possible in outward semblance to an Assyrian invasion or a stroke of idiotcy; it will come perhaps in the form to which the soul is most sensitive, and, in the case of those who, although they need a stern correction, are yet God's true people, and with whom his Spirit still strives, it will be adjusted with great tenderness to their strength and powers of endurance.

Two words have to be said in conclusion. One to those who, while they have general good desires and intentions, are not prepared for that entire surrender which God requires of the soul in which He will work, and which He will guide with his eye.

If you must choose between them, and there is no other alternative than that, which you so earnestly deprecate, of losing altogether God's grace and favour, is not the guidance of the eye better than that of the bit? Whether is easier to bear—some form of penal discipline inflicted by God upon the reluctant soul (the application of the goad to the recalcitrant ox, to use our Lord's image in addressing the persecuting Saul [1]), or that self-discipline and self-control, which undoubtedly is involved in the whole-hearted service of Him, but which is abun-

[1] *See* Acts ix. 5.

dantly sweetened and lightened by the habitual sense of his presence, and the consciousness that we are under the guidance of his eye? "For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light."[1]

And then a word to those whom no reserve or untruthfulness in the inward parts detains from at once entering upon this service of God,—a service so highly remunerated both in the life which now is, and in that which is to come. If you are to be guided by God's eye, you must keep your eye upon his, ever glancing upwards. You must be ever mentally saying with Hagar, "Thou God seest me. Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?"[2] The perfection for which thou sighest is not to be reached otherwise than by putting thyself under His eye in all that thou settest thy hand unto, as it is said; "Walk before me, and be thou perfect."[3] The rest which thou covetest, and which it is so hard to maintain amidst the changes, chances, temptations, excitements, reverses, of a troublesome world, is not to be otherwise maintained than by the habitual consciousness of that "presence," in which "*is* fulness of joy."[4] Is it not written; "My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest"?[5]

[1] St. Matt. xi. 30. [2] Gen. xvi. 13. [3] Gen. xvii. 1.
[4] *See* Psalm xvi. 11. [5] Exod. xxxiii. 14.

CHAPTER IV

CONSCIENCE

Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.—1 Cor. viii. 7.

In our last Chapter we considered the guidance which God vouchsafes to his people by his eye, and saw that this guidance was nothing else than the secret movement of his Spirit in the conscience, in answer to the soul's sincere petition to be guided in the right path; "Shew thou me the way that I should walk in."[1] But the complete consideration of the subject demands that something shall be said respecting the conscience, the internal organ (as Divine Providence and Holy Scripture are the external ones) through which Almighty God communicates with, controls, and directs the individual soul. Some general knowledge of an organ which plays so important a part in man's relations to God seems to be quite necessary for those who would guide themselves or others in the spiritual life.

We saw what was the beautiful image suggested by the promise, "I will guide thee with mine eye,"—

[1] *See* Psalm cxliii. 8. P.B.V.

the image of the watchful and tender mother, restraining or encouraging or consoling her children by the glance of her eye, without any audible words. But we may profitably pursue the image a little further. In order to a child's being guided thus, it must itself have an eye to enable it to read the mother's glance. A blind child cannot be guided by the eye. Similarly, in order to the Christian's guidance by his heavenly Father, not only must the Holy Spirit be vouchsafed to him, but there must be in his nature an organ receptive of the Holy Spirit, an organ so framed as to be capable of his inspirations. This organ is the conscience, which may be called man's inner eye, as the Holy Spirit is God's eye.

The conscience, man's inner eye. There is a good deal of confusion of thought in many well-disposed people on the subject of the conscience, which this image, if studied, will tend to clear up, many floating erroneous notions which it will serve to correct. It is very commonly supposed by those who do not take the pains to have clear ideas on religious subjects, that a conscientious action and a right action are the same things; that, if an action is conscientious, it cannot fail of being right. This is a mistake, which people are apt to fall into from forgetfulness of one of the earliest rules of reasoning,—that you cannot transpose the terms of a statement which affirms something universally, and infer that after such transposition the statement will still hold good,—that you cannot conclude from the assertion that all men are animals (which is an undoubted fact) that therefore all animals are men. All right actions are, no

doubt, conscientious; it is impossible for an action to be right, unless it be done in accordance with the dictates of conscience,—unless the conscience, if it does not actually prompt it, at all events assents to it, approves it, sanctions it. But the converse will not hold good. Not every conscientious action, nay, not every action prompted and enjoined by the conscience, is therefore a right one;—such actions may be, there are instances in which they have been, atrociously wicked and wrong. St. Paul before his conversion persecuted the Christians, and assisted at the stoning of St. Stephen, under the impression that he was doing God service; his conscience therefore went with what he did. But we know that as a fact he was persecuting the Lord Jesus, in striking at the members of His mystical body;[1] and he himself intimates afterwards that the sin was so great in itself, that he could not have obtained mercy for it, had he not done it "ignorantly in unbelief."[2] The Hindoo mother will throw her infant under the car of Juggernaut, with the full conviction that this hideous sacrifice is acceptable to the deities, whom she ignorantly worships,—all the more acceptable, because it rends her own heart-strings in sunder. Hers is a conscientious action, yet for all that an abominable one, and most offensive to the true God, —the God of love and fatherly compassions.

One most important word is wanted to make the statement, "All actions done in accordance with conscience are right actions," a true and tenable one. Insert the word "enlightened" before the word "conscience," and the statement becomes true and

[1] *See* Acts ix. 4, 5. [2] *See* 1 Tim. i. 13.

tenable,—"All actions done in accordance with an enlightened conscience are right actions." And what is the light wherewith the conscience must be enlightened, in order to make the action done in conformity with conscience right? It is the light of God's Spirit; for which the Psalmist prays, when he says, "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me;"[1] for which the Church, framing her petition on that of the Psalmist, asks in the Collect for St. John the Evangelist's Day, "Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church." The eye, which is framed to be receptive of this heavenly light, is the conscience. Light cannot deceive or lead astray. The morning, when it dawns upon the earth, shows all things in their true colours. But an eye may be in a morbid or diseased state. It may be weak; may present a double image, and so confuse us; may subject us to an optical illusion, that is, may have an object painted on its retina to which there is nothing in nature corresponding.

This liability of the conscience to derangement is more than once recognised in Holy Scripture; and it is observable that it is recognised as a liability attaching to good people no less than wicked ones. As to the wicked, it is predicted that after the days of the Apostles[2] some should "fall away from the faith," induced to do so "through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies,"[3] the hypocrisy consisting apparently in the ascetic practices which these men should recom-

[1] Psalm xliii. 3.

[2] This is all that ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς can be taken to import,—"in later times," not necessarily "the last time," or "the time of the end."

[3] *See* 1 Tim. iv. 2. R.V.

mend [1] as a blind for their false doctrines, which St. Paul calls "doctrines of demons." [2] Notwithstanding this hollow show of godliness, these men would be really bad men, "having their conscience seared with a hot iron." [3] "A seared conscience,"—the expression implies that the conscience is by its own nature sensitive, as of course it must be to be capable of illumination by the Holy Spirit. Is not the bodily eye, framed to be receptive of natural light, the finest, most susceptible, and delicate of organs? And shall we not suppose the inner eye, the moral eye, framed by the Creator for the reception of that uncreated Light, the Holy Ghost, to be at least equally sensitive in moral and spiritual concerns? Where the conscience, by long and perverse resistance to the convictions wrought in it by God's Spirit, has become "seared," there of course its sensibility is destroyed just in proportion to the degree of resistance. What an awful condition! The sensitiveness of the bodily eye may, no doubt, lay it open to suffering from small causes, from "a grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair." [4] But what would be the condition of an eye, which should be sensible of none of these annoyances, into which the dust, the gnat, the wandering hair should fall, without producing any discomfort? It would be an eye seared with a hot iron, as Prince Arthur's were

[1] "Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats." Verse 3.

[2] Verse 1. R.V. *marg.*

[3] *See* Verse 2. The allusion may perhaps be to the common practice of branding slaves as a stigma for misconduct, and the Apostle may be understood to imply that the false teachers of whom he is speaking would be the branded slaves of sin, carrying about its visible impress. Even so, however, it does not follow that the Authorised Translation is wrong. The branding of a slave, on whatever part of the person it might be inflicted, would render that part insensible.

[4] *King John*, Act iv. Scene 1.

proposed to be. In other words it would be an eye which had lost its use as an eye, an eye put out, a blind eye.

Again ; a *defiled* conscience is mentioned in Holy Scripture, together with the means whereby the defiled conscience may be purified.[1] In a protest against Judaizing teachers in Crete, who from mercenary motives sought to revive under the system of the Gospel those legal distinctions between ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness which had passed away with the ceremonial law, St. Paul says as follows: "Unto the pure" (that is, to the pure in heart) "all things *are* pure:" (exactly coinciding with what the Divine Master had said, when He inveighed against mere ritual cleansing in the absence of moral purity: "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. . . . but rather give alms of such things as ye have";—do acts of love in a spirit of love,—"and, behold, all things are clean unto you"[2]); "but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."[3] And as to the means by which the defiled conscience may be purged, the

[1] It is observable that, while we are told that the "defiled" conscience may be "purged," no remedy is indicated for the "seared" conscience. This is partly due to the conditions imposed by the figure employed;—there *is* no remedy for the branding of the body with a hot iron; sensibility has deserted the part so branded, never to return. And as regards the seared *conscience*, there is no remedy for it, *except through the restoration of its sensibility by the Holy Spirit of God.* When it pleases God to perform this act of grace, and the conscience becomes once again sensible of its defilement, then no doubt the Blood of Christ, "the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. xiii. 1), becomes available for its "purgation." But it must first be made *to feel*, before it can be "*purged.*"

[2] St. Luke xi. 38, 39, 41.

[3] *See* Tit. i. 15, 16.

Epistle to the Hebrews is clear and explicit; "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"[1]

Let us pause to consider what is implied in the phrase of the "*conscience* being purged," and again in the expression "purged from dead works." A guilty conscience affirms sin in its possessor; brings in a verdict of "guilty" against him; it is not silent, it speaks. A purged conscience speaks also, affirms forgiveness and acceptance through the blood of Christ, brings in a verdict of full and free acquittal.[2] And again: "purged from *dead* works," that is, from works not animated by love to God and man, which is the soul of good works, and in the absence of which all our doings, however innocent, nay, however outwardly fair-seeming, are "counted dead before" God.[3] With the affirmation by conscience of our forgiveness and acceptance through Christ there arises in the heart like a fountain of pure water, the love which is the spring of *living* works.

[1] Heb. ix. 13, 14.

[2] See this same thought more expanded in Part II. chap. vii. ("Purity of heart"). I wish to emphasize it. Conscience, according to its etymology (*con-scientia*), is that faculty of our nature which, together with ourselves, our personality, our *Ego*, takes knowledge both of the law written in the heart, and of our sins against it. When those sins are washed away through the Blood of Christ, it takes knowledge of the forgiveness, recognises it, affirms it, says, "It is so; and I *know* it to be so. As I knew myself to be a sinner formerly, so I now know myself to be a *forgiven* sinner." The very same faculty which recognises the sin, recognises also its absolution through the Precious Blood.

[3] *See* the Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday.

But Holy Scripture speaks of the consciences even of those who in the main are true disciples of Christ, as being sometimes weak and wanting in robustness. And let it be observed that this species of moral infirmity is in the other extreme from that of the *seared* conscience. There the conscience had lost its sensitiveness; or at least its sensitiveness was much impaired. Here it is unduly and morbidly sensitive,—takes cognisance of things as sins which are in truth, and as viewed objectively, no sins at all. The Apostle is speaking of meats which had been offered in sacrifice unto idols, as to the partaking of which many of the primitive Christians had conscientious scruples. He says explicitly that, while those scruples were to be respected by their fellow Christians, there was really nothing in them, they were prejudices which had no ground in reason —if you will, superstitions. "As concerning the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol *is* nothing in the world, and that *there is* none other God but one." Since an idol is nothing in the world, food cannot possibly contract any real defilement by being offered to it. The defilement exists only in the fancy of those who entertain conscientious scruples about eating. "Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled." [1]

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 4, 7. It should be observed that the defilement of conscience here spoken of is not the same as the much more serious defilement already considered, respecting which the Apostle speaks with such severity in Tit. i. 15. Here his tone, so far from being severe, is all tenderness to the weak Christians whom he has in his eye, and

The same subject is taken up at length in the Epistle to the Romans (this double testimony of God's Word in two separate parts of it being designed no doubt to call our attention to the great importance of a right understanding of the matters treated of), and handled in precisely the same manner. "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus," says the Apostle, "that *there is* nothing unclean of itself:" (the groundlessness in reason of the scruples about eating meat offered in sacrifice to idols could not possibly be expressed in stronger language); "but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean." Accordingly the rule of Christian charity is to be observed, and the stronger brother is to abstain from meats offered to idols, because this use of his Christian liberty might tempt the weaker one to do that which in his case would be sinful; "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died!"[1] But while it appears to be the burden of St. Paul's exhortation in both these passages to throw his shield over the weaker brother, to protect him from being scandalized, from being drawn into an unconscientious and therefore a wrong action, nay, even from being looked down upon

whom he is commending to the sympathy and consideration of their stronger brethren. The word translated "defile" in the two passages is a different word; in the one case it is μολύνω; in the other μιαίνω. Archbishop Trench has shown (*Synonyms of the New Testament*, § xxxi. pp. 120, 121, Cambridge 1854) that the fundamental idea of the first word is that of "smearing" (external), of the second that of "staining" (with colour which sinks in, and becomes fixed to, and ingrained in a substance). This would lead us to see in the defilement of conscience spoken of in Tit. i. 15, a deep and clinging moral taint; in that of 1 Cor. viii. 7, a much more superficial pollution, which does not at all in the same degree take hold of the affections and the will.

[1] Rom. xiv. 14, 15.

as narrow-minded, prejudiced, superstitious ("Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not"), it is no less clearly implied that the weak conscience exposes its possessor to spiritual dangers, against which he must be put upon his guard;—"Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."[1] And again (to the Corinthians): "Why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?"[2] To judge another is a great and grievous sin. It is an usurpation of the Divine Master's office, specially delegated to Him by God the Father, and as such is strictly forbidden both by Himself, and by his Apostles speaking in his name: "Judge not, that ye be not judged";[3] "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come";[4] "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest."[5]

And all experience shows that the tendency and snare of the weak and unduly sensitive conscience is to judge others, who cannot accept the restrictions which it imposes upon itself. How often is this seen in reference to certain worldly amusements, against which some entertain serious scruples, which no doubt make it right for themselves to abstain, while others are not able to see in such forms of recreation anything contrary to God's revealed will and word.

[1] Rom. xiv. 3, 4. [2] 1 Cor. x. 29, 30. [3] St. Matt. vii. 1. [4] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [5] Rom. ii. 1.

How often have the maintainers of total abstinence erred by censuring the Christian liberty of others who cannot see their way to adopt restrictions so stringent as those which from the highest motives, and with the most beneficial effect, they have imposed upon themselves. The censure may not have been a formal one,—nay, may not even have transpired in their language,—but there has been a Pharisaical assumption of superiority in their tone which makes itself felt, even without words,—a saying by manner and demeanour, if not expressly; "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou."[1]

But apart from the moral dangers to which in our relation with others, a weak conscience exposes us, it is calculated to be a harassing drawback to ourselves in the conduct of the spiritual life. Nothing more effectually destroys that peace of mind which lies at the root of all spiritual progress, than morbid groundless scruples. It being part of Satan's policy, wherever he feels that he cannot hurt, to harass, some of the best and most devoted men have often been subjected to this form of trial, especially when a feeble bodily constitution has promoted and aggravated the mental ailment. Their whole life from morning to night has been poisoned for a period by divers scruples, each of which, however much it might have been condemned and put out of court by a robust common sense, has found at all events something to allege for itself, which seems to them, looking at it with their jaundiced eyes, to be reasonable. By a mere accident they have overslept themselves, and in consequence their morning de-

[1] Isaiah, lxv. 5.

votions have been pushed into so narrow a corner as to have been all but stifled ; instead of immediately seeking pardon through Christ for anything which God may have seen to be wrong in them, and then going on quietly as before, the departure from their usual routine is allowed to be a burden upon the conscience all the day long. Or they are strolling in the fields, and in the freedom of their walk it occurs to them to take a stick out of the hedge, and wave it in their hands; but suddenly they are checked by the thought, How many insects may you not destroy by the rude grasp of your hand upon that stick! Or there is an opportunity which presents itself for a moment, and then passes away, of trying to do some good,—of giving away a tract which may be useful, or of speaking some word of warning or sympathy ; but they are shamefaced about it, fear it may be misconstrued, set down to spiritual pride in them, at least thought very singular and eccentric ; so they let the opportunity slip by, and then immediately comes the harassing thought, Oh! what untold good might have been done under God's blessing, had I been but faithful in that crisis,—the soil may have been prepared to receive the seed ; I was inwardly prompted to sow the seed, and I withheld my hand. Perhaps they are even urged, at whatever inconvenience, to go after the persons they have been just thrown across, and say, "I should have said this or that; done thus, or thus."[1] And the worst is that by these miserable balancings of the mind, and sentiments of remorse and apprehension, not only

[1] The instances of scruples here given are all sketched from the life, the writer having come across them in the course of his ministry.

are they made thoroughly unhappy, but much good time, of which they might have availed themselves for solid spiritual progress, for "serving God with a quiet mind," as one of our Collects so beautifully puts it, is sunk and thrown away. Such are some specimens of the distresses to which a morbidly sensitive conscience exposes those who are afflicted with it; and when the pain caused by these, and their unhappy effects upon the right regulation of the mind and heart, are duly considered, we are disposed to think that the heathen satirist was not far wrong, when he placed first among the objects of legitimate prayer, "ut sit mens sana in corpore sano,"[1] the possession of a sound mind in a sound body. Yes; a sound mind—sound particularly in the performance of the mind's great moral function, in the workings of the conscience. Conscience is, as we have seen, the moral eye of the mind, as wisely and skilfully adapted to receive the intimations of God's will by the Holy Spirit, as the bodily eye is to receive the natural light. But what a fine and delicate structure is the bodily eye,—how easily deranged and disordered! And what a delicate structure is the conscience, how exceedingly liable to have its sensitiveness utterly destroyed by wilful sin, which is far the more usual case, and yet how liable also, in the case of the few, to a morbid sensibility, which at once harasses the sufferer and retards all spiritual progress! Let the unspeakable importance of this organ and its extreme delicacy be duly weighed, and assuredly we shall make it our first care and solicitude to keep the conscience in a

[1] *Juvenalis Satiræ*, x. 356.

healthy state, free from cloud and stain, sensitive to each glance of God's eye, and at the same time robust. "Herein do I exercise myself," said St. Paul to Felix, "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men."[1] What a noble spiritually-bracing exercise is this,—the athletic of the spiritual life, by which the faith in Christ, which is the first step in that life, gains tone and hardihood and vigour! Before, however, this exercise is possible to it, the conscience must be brought to a sound condition by the application of the various remedies and provisions of God's grace suited to its various maladies. The defiled conscience must be purged by constant recourse to the Precious Blood, which was shed for its purgation. The morbid conscience must be rescued from its scruples by God's fulfilment of that prayer to it, "Grant us by thy Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort."[2] While even the seared conscience may be restored to its sensibility by the exertion of Divine power upon the heart, even as the withered right hand of the man in the synagogue regained its sense of touch, and its faculty of grasping, when, in obedience to the Saviour's not only enjoining but enabling word, he stretched forth his hand.[3]

One word needs to be said in concluding this Chapter, in order to bring out the teaching of the twofold imagery under which the operation of God's Spirit has been set forth in it. We have spoken of the Holy Spirit as the Divine light, to the reception of which the eye of the conscience is adapted by its

[1] Acts xxiv. 16. [2] *See* Collect for Whitsun Day.
[3] *See* St. Luke vi. 6 *to* 11.

structure. We have also spoken of the Spirit as being God's eye, the glance of which makes itself felt in the conscience (which is man's eye), according to that gracious promise in Psalm xxxii., "I will guide thee with mine eye." Both images are strictly Scriptural, and have a rich mine of teaching underlying them. The light of the sun is God's special gift, his gift of gifts in nature; it shows all things in its true colours; it never misleads; its shining or withdrawal is not in man's arbitrament: "Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place?"[1] But the image of the light is defective in one particular; it requires to be supplemented by the image of the eye. Guidance by God's eye gives the notion of a personal God, who keeps his eye fixed upon man's heart. *Man's* eye is part of a being who has personality; and it is an instrument —almost as powerful an instrument as speech—by which that being exerts a moral influence. Guide me not only with thy light, but with thine eye, O God! Make me conscious that I momently live and move, and have my being, think, speak, act, under thy immediate and close inspection. And make me entirely willing to be guided by thine eye. Let my conscience respond instantaneously to thine every glance, whether it directs, or warns, or stimulates, or consoles; yea, let mine eye meet thine, court thine, all the day long! Thus shall I comply with that rule of sanctity, which Thou didst lay down for thy servant Abraham; "I *am* the Almighty God walk before me, and be thou perfect."[2]

[1] Job. xxxviii. 12. [2] Gen. xvii. 1.

PART I

THE INITIAL COUNSEL

CHAPTER I

THE REST THAT IS GIVEN

No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.—St. Matt. xi. 27, 28, 29, 30.

Oh! beautiful words, — the sweetest chime that Heaven has ever sounded in the ears of sin-stricken, sorrow-stricken mortals,—sweeter far than that sublime snatch of angelic minstrelsy which, "when all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course,"[1] floated down upon the ears of the shepherds of Bethlehem, while the glory of the Lord lighted up the dark pastures that lay around them![2]

And oh! wonderful words, as of the Simple and Incomprehensible One — words so simple that a young child can understand something of them, and feel something of the force of their attractiveness, and yet so infinitely rich in thought that a thousand preachers might present them, each under a new aspect, and with a fresh application, and yet each

[1] Wisdom, xviii. 14.

[2] *See* St. Luke ii. 13, 14.

should after all only skim the surface of their meaning, as a seabird, flying low before the storm, grazes the water with its wing, but hardly dips below it. How utterly inadequate must all words of men be to expound such a word of God as this!

Two rests are made mention of in this word of God; and the first condition of our gaining an insight into its meaning is that we should perceive the distinction between the two rests, and between the methods of attaining them. There is a rest given gratuitously,—"I will *give* you rest"; and there is also a rest found—found not without exertion and self-discipline,—"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; . . . and ye shall *find* rest." It is to be regretted, I think, under these circumstances, that in quoting the passage, people should so often stop short with the verse which describes the first rest. Even the Comfortable Words in the Communion Service would have been made none the less comfortable, had the second rest found a place in them. For what is said of human persons, in the most sacred and indissoluble of relationships, may surely be said of doctrines which God in His Holy Word associates: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."[1]

But in order that each of these rests may have its due consideration and weight given to it in the mind of the reader, each of them shall have a Chapter to itself. What has been said in the Introductory Chapters has, I trust, cleared the way for the inquiry which we now propose. The inquiry is as to the first thing which those who are earnestly desirous of

[1] St. Matt. xix. 6; St. Mark x. 9.

serving and pleasing God have to do,—as to the first step which has to be taken in his service. If this question were asked as an abstract one,—independent of the age and circumstances of those respecting whom it is asked,—the answer which would probably arise to the lips of most people would be —"Baptism." And rightly so. Baptism is the entrance into God's service and into the school of Christ. And though, as a matter of fact, Baptism lies behind us, is a step, not which *has to be taken*, but *which has been taken* for each of us in our infancy, and therefore, so far as *it* is concerned, the question is not one that has any bearing on our present practice,—it will certainly complete and illustrate what is to be said, to speak of Baptism for a few moments, and show how admirably it works in with the passage lying before us. That passage contains our Saviour's invitation to the weary and heavy laden to come to Him, and his promise that for only coming He will give them rest. But I find in the Gospels another invitation to come to Christ, addressed to persons evidently in different circumstances from those who are here contemplated: "Suffer the little children to come unto me." And they did come. "And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them."[1] Some of my readers may perhaps be thinking—"Well, but no possible stretch of ingenuity can bring the two invitations under the same category. The one is addressed to toil-worn, sin-worn, sorrow-worn men and women, who have made a considerable and painful experience of life. The other is to the little

[1] St. Mark x. 14, 16.

ones, in all the freshness and brightness of their faculties, upon whom this sad experience has not yet dawned, whose sorrows, whose sins, whose toils are yet to come—upon whom neither yoke nor burden has ever yet been laid." But let us look a little deeper into the matter. Is there not a real burden lying upon every person born into this world, at the time of his being so born? What else is original sin, that "fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is ingendered of the offspring of *Adam;* whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit?"[1] Is not man, as uniformly inheriting this infection of nature, born under the cloud of God's wrath, as it is said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me";[2] "the wicked are estranged from the womb";[3] "that which is born of the flesh is flesh";[4] "by nature the children of wrath."[5] Then the little infant too, though the evil in it is at present undeveloped, falls under the category of burdened souls; as indeed it gives by its wailings a prelude of the sorrows which shall hereafter come upon it. It is not a holy soul; it is not a happy soul; if happiness can be predicated of it in any sense at all, it is only because it is ignorant of evil, not because it is not implicated in it. Then, as regards it too, the gracious invitation of the text has to be complied with. It cannot come to Christ; but it is brought to Him by his Church, finding her warrant for so

[1] Article ix. (*Of Original or Birth-sin*). [2] Psalm li. 5.
[3] Psalm lviii. 3. [4] St. John iii. 6. [5] Eph. ii. 3.

doing in those other gracious words of his, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," and "nothing doubting but that he favourably alloweth this charitable work of hers, in bringing the little ones to his holy Baptism."[1] The infant being received by Him, and grafted into his mystical body, as a lively member thereof, the guilt of original sin is remitted, such grace as it is capable of receiving is granted to it, as a prophylactic against the actings of the corrupt and selfish nature, and God looks on it with acceptance through the Son of his love. But, as the basis of the whole transaction, it is understood that, as soon as it can for itself, and in its own person, come to Christ, it will do so,—come with repentance and renunciation of the evil within and around it; come with faith in his person, in his work, and in its results; come also with that surrender of the will to Him which is the thing principally intended by the words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."

The first step, then, to be taken in the service of God is *to realise our Baptism*, to make the act of our parents and sponsors in bringing us to the Font our own act by consciously and deliberately doing it over again, with all the light which the proof that we have made of life—our actual experience of sin and sorrow—has thrown upon it and upon its absolute necessity. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden"—not ye that are heavy laden only, but that labour also—not only ye who have the burden lying upon you, but that groan under it

[1] Publick Baptism of Infants (Exhortation upon the words of the Gospel).

also. The difference is not slight or unimportant. Nothing more than the action of the natural conscience is necessary to make a man acknowledge that he is a sinner; but the mere acknowledging a burden is not labouring under it. Probably all of us would at once say, if charged with having broken God's law, "Yes, I know that I have done many wrong things in my time, which I now see to be wrong, and regret, and would not do if they were to come over again." But how many, if they were quite candid, would add; "I cannot say, however, that these things weigh upon me, or seriously disturb my peace,—or that the consciousness of having done them is oppressive. As for the judgment-day, I trust it will be well with me through God's great mercy; whatever shall befall me then, I may look to face it as composedly as my neighbours, all of whom have also done wrong things in their early days, and many of whom have done things much more wrong, breaking out in forms of vice and folly to which I have been a stranger"! Alas! the mind which in reviewing its past misdeeds travels in this direction, while it has a *conscience* of sin, has no *sense* of sin at all. The genuine sense of sin, under which alone we can approach Christ sincerely, so burdens the mind with the apprehension of our own guilt, and of God's wrath due thereto and consequent thereon, that excuses become for us an impossibility; we cannot see ourselves otherwise than in a bad light; the flattering self-love which induces us to make the best of our case cannot get a hearing. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,"[1] cries David, the aspect of

[1] Psalm li. 4.

his sin towards God as a righteous Judge and loving Father absorbing every other aspect of it, even the gross scandal given by it to his subjects, which in the merely natural view of it was one of its most patent features. So it ever is in godly sorrow ; outrage done to God, to his holy law, to his fatherly love, is the thought which wrings the mind with contrition. But while this feature of true penitence needs to be set forth, lest those who have it not should flatter themselves that they have it, it must not be pressed to the discouragement of any whose sorrow, though low in degree, is genuine and of the right order. That our sin should be really burdensome to us in any measure is enough to bring us within the range of the invitation to those that labour and are heavy laden. To none of us is it a burden as oppressive as it behoves to be. Not the contrition of the holiest of saints is in its intensity and fervour adequate. Granted only a genuine sense of the burden, and a genuine desire to be relieved of it,—and the invitation is addressed to us, and we have a full right to approach the Lord on the ground of it.

"Come unto me." The words are so extremely familiar to us, and familiarity has so sadly dulled and blurred their meaning, that it asks some little mental effort to bring them into relief and give them sharpness of outline. They are felt to be words for all time,—not for those only, or chiefly, who were on earth, and lived in Palestine, when they were uttered. But, in apprehending the force of them, we cannot do without the exemplifications of them in the past. The literal bodily resorts which sick and suffering patients then made to the Saviour, help us to con-

ceive in a lively and interesting way the blessed results of coming to Him in a higher form and with a different species of burden. Not one single case is on record of sick folks who came or were brought to Christ in the days of his flesh, in which the patient was dismissed without carrying away the boon he sued for. The treatment was occasionally varied (a fact which is probably to be accounted for by our Lord's adapting the method of cure to what He perceived to be the moral necessities of each patient,—and a fact most encouraging, as showing that, notwithstanding the thousands whom He daily healed, He never dealt with patients wholesale, but ever with discrimination of, and insight into, the particular case), but never was it otherwise than entirely successful. Then the irresistible conclusion is, that when the felt maladies of the soul—the fever of pride or lust or temper, the paralysis of an enslaved will, the clinging leprosy of an evil habit—are laid before Him in prayer, He will give the same relief in his own good time and method,—for surely the maladies of the soul must be to Him objects of greater compassion than those of the body. Was the bodily approach of old so fruitful in beneficent results, and shall the spiritual approach of the heart be attended with effects less happy? It is impossible to conceive this. There is indeed one difference between bodily and spiritual malady, which may account for the much greater rarity of the cure in spiritual cases than of yore attended the application in bodily cases. Men feel bodily maladies so keenly, that they cannot fail to be deeply in earnest to be rid of them; nobody loves or clings to a bodily dis-

order. But alas! it is not so with our sins. It is only too possible, even while we pray against them as endangering our soul's salvation, to love them and cling to them. And the will to keep them, so long as it exists, must act as a bar even to the Saviour's power of remedy. It was not without a pregnant meaning in his words that He said to the cripple in the porch at Bethesda, whose long infirmity had stamped out of his heart all hope and energy of resolve, "Wilt thou be made whole?"[1] Even to a bodily cure a will thoroughly roused to desire it is indispensable. How much more necessary must such a will be to the spiritual relief, which the Saviour gives from the burden of sin and sorrow.

But what is it which our Lord holds out as an inducement to the weary and heavy laden to come to Him? He holds out to them exactly what they crave for;—for what is it that the weary and heavy laden crave? For rest, for refreshment under their manifold burdens. Then this is what they shall receive—"rest"—"I will give you rest." In translating words of such vital importance, words in which hundreds of thousands of souls have found, and will to the end of time find, a fresh spring of hope and energy, the extremest accuracy consistent with idiom is desirable; and on that account what may seem the less attractive version in our Communion Service has at all events something to say in its favour. It translates one word by one word, whereas the version in our Bibles gives us two words for Christ's one. There is no word corresponding to "give" in the original; it is simply, "I will rest

[1] St. John v. 6.

you," or "I will refresh you," or "I will relieve you." The relief, refreshment, repose—whatever you please to call it—is all to come from Christ, to be administered by Him from first to last, and He pledges Himself to grant the relief to all who come, simply for the coming. Now, then, what is the nature and character of this rest? It is clearly intimated in the foregoing context; but by detaching the passage from its surroundings, and looking at it apart from what led up to it, though it still breathes a holy calm, and speaks peace to the soul, its point is sacrificed. In the preceding verse the counsels of human salvation, so profound in their mysteriousness (for why should Divine truth be revealed to one man and not to another?) are represented as laid deep between the two first Persons of the Blessed Trinity. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father."[1] If a man then does know the Son, it is by the Father's communication to him of knowledge, by the Father's revelation, drawing, gift. Except under the Father's attraction, exerted by the Holy Spirit, no man ever does resort to the Son, however faithfully the Son's invitation may be heralded in his ears; and hence, when St. Peter confessed our Lord to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God," he is distinctly told that the Father had given him this insight, this knowledge; "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."[2] And St. Paul, in like manner, recognises the heavenly Father as having been in his case also the Revealer: "When it pleased God," he says, "to reveal his Son in me;"[3]—pray observe the

[1] St. Matt. xi. 27. [2] St. Matt. xvi. 17. [3] Gal. i. 15, 16.

force of the preposition, "*in* me"; in view of the vision on the road to Damascus, and the colloquy held with the risen Saviour in the course of that vision, one would rather have said that God revealed his Son *to* than *in* St. Paul; but no—the process was chiefly internal, the revelation to the eye and to the ear would have been nothing without a revelation to the inner man, to the heart, the conscience, the spiritual faculty.

But our Lord goes on,—"Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*."[1] Thus as the Father reveals the Son to the soul, and draws men to Him by the revelation, so the Son in his turn reveals the Father to those who correspond to the Father's drawing, and throw themselves at the Son's feet with the burden of their sorrows and their sins. And this revelation of the Father, this insight into the Father's character, is "the rest wherewith He causes the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing."[2] St. Philip, not knowing the depth of his own words, cried, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us."[3] Yes! it *sufficeth us*,—it is indeed a satisfying revelation, this exhibition of the heavenly Father to the sin-laden, conscience-stricken, sorrow-laden soul; it is a revelation in which the soul experiences rest. For the Father is revealed as having so loved us, as to give his Son for us;[4] and the argument of the Apostle is seen by him, to whom the revelation is made, to be irresistible,—"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"[5] If I have a

[1] St. Matt. xi. 27. [2] *See* Isaiah xxviii. 12.
[3] St. John xiv. 8. [4] *See* St. John iii. 16. [5] Rom. viii. 32.

Father so tenderly interested in me, and having given me such irrefragable assurance of his tender interest, if his infinite wisdom and his infinite power are both to be made to subserve the purposes and designs of his love; if the glory, beauty, and blessedness of his character are an exhaustless theme of adoring contemplation, and if the mind can never tire of exploring his wonders in Nature, in Providence, in human history, and in human life,—why, if I have indeed such an one to look up to in my pilgrimage through life, to refer to in all my difficulties, to hold my hand in all my trials, and lift me over them, one who, although He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," [1] yet condescends to stand to me in the tender relationship of Father, do I need anything else to content, to satisfy me, to set at rest my doubts, my misgivings, my fears, to give me peace in contemplating both the difficulties which time may have in store for me, and even the solemn prospect of eternity? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." [2] In the assurance of this love we have more than enough to tide us over the waves of this troublesome world, and to enable us to say in the prospect of another state of existence; "My flesh and my heart faileth: *but* God *is* the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." [3] It is then the revelation of this Father character of God, made not to the outward ear, but to the heart and conscience and inmost spirit, by making which to the weary and heavy laden Christ relieves and gives them rest. And this rest lies at the outset, not at the close, of

[1] *See* Isaiah lvii. 15. [2] 1 John iii. 1. [3] Psalm lxxiii. 6.

the Christian life. It is the result of taking the first step in God's service, the step of acting out our Baptism, of doing for ourselves consciously and deliberately what was done for us when we were brought to the Font,—in brief, it is the result of coming to Christ with our burdens, and laying them down at his feet. Have we taken this first step, taken it sincerely, with a real sense of sin, and a real desire to be rid of its burden, albeit the sense may not have been at all so profound, nor the desire at all so lively, as our need really demands? Then the same Spirit, which wrought in us that sense and that desire, has in a measure opened our eyes to see the treasures of grace and mercy, which there are in the wounds of Christ, and in the Father character of God; and in the comfort and power of that revelation, waxing ever brighter and clearer as our course draws towards its close, we may go forward "from strength to strength," receiving out of his fulness "grace for grace,"[1] until at length in the heavenly "Zion" we appear "before God."[2]

[1] *See* St. John i. 16. [2] *See* Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

CHAPTER II

THE REST THAT IS FOUND

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.—St. Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30.

Two rests are spoken of in this passage, the first a rest given, the second a rest found. The first rest consists in the knowledge of God as our reconciled Father. The Son of God reveals God in his Father character to the labouring and heavy laden souls, who come to Him under the Father's drawing, and in this way refreshes, relieves, gives them rest. The second rest, that which offers itself for our consideration in the present Chapter, consists in the possession of the mind of Christ. And observe that this is a rest *found*, as distinct from the rest *given*;—"Ye shall *find* rest unto your souls." There is no finding without seeking, as it is said, "Seek, and ye shall find";[1] nay, there is no finding of precious things worth finding without *diligent* seeking. "What woman," says the Divine Master, "having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it?*"[2]

[1] St. Matt. vii. 7; St. Luke xi. 9. [2] St. Luke xv. 8.

The search demands effort, exertion, toil, stooping; the candle must be lighted, the furniture moved, the searcher go upon her hands and knees. So it is intimated in the words before us that, in order to the finding rest unto the soul, there must be the submission to a yoke—the stooping to a burden. And yet it is far from being the oppressive yoke and the crushing burden, which sin and the world and Satan lay upon their servants. It is an easy yoke, a light burden; nay, rest, truest peace, "the peace which passeth all understanding,"[1] is found in bearing it.

"Take *my* yoke upon you"; and again, in the next verse, He speaks of "*my* burden." What are we to understand by the "my"? Does it mean the yoke and burden which Christ Himself bore, or the yoke and burden which He lays upon those who come to Him? I answer with some confidence, "Both." The gracious and loving Lord lays no yoke upon the neck of his people, to which He did not Himself submit. This submission to the yoke on his own part is implied in the words, "I am meek and lowly in heart." It was his meekness and lowliness of heart which moved Him to submit to the yoke—which moved Him to say on coming into the world, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,"[2] although the doing of the will opened out a long perspective of toil and humiliation, and physical and mental suffering. Nor would the yoke which He imposes be at all so easy to his servants as it is, were it not for the thought that He has borne meekly and lovingly the same yoke before them—nay, a far, far heavier yoke; for "behold, and see if there be any

[1] *See* Phil. iv. 7. [2] Heb. x. 9, with Psalm xl. 7, 8.

sorrow like unto my sorrow."[1] They are encouraged to run their race "with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith," by the consideration that He, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross" (that was his yoke, and they too have to take up and carry after Him their much lighter cross), "despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."[2]

Let so much be said of the force of the "my" in "my yoke" and "my burden." What now is the "yoke," and what is the "burden," which He Himself bore, and now imposes upon his disciples? A variety of answers might be given, each of them true as far as it goes, and yet none of them exhausting the meaning of the divine and profound words. The precepts of Christ are a part of the yoke; and to observe his precepts is to take upon us the same yoke which He took upon Himself as regards the precepts of the Father; "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."[3] The providential orderings of Christ for us (I say advisedly "of Christ," for it is He who at present from the throne of the mediatorial kingdom administers all the affairs of Providence; it is Joseph ruling for Pharaoh, not Pharaoh ruling in person[4]) are another part of the yoke which we are to take upon us, and of the burden to which we are to stoop, even as He submitted to the Providential orderings of the Father for Him, when He said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,"[5] and again, "Nevertheless

[1] Lam. i. 12. [2] *See* Heb. xii. 1, 2. [3] St. John xv. 10.
[4] *See* Gen. xli. 39, 40. [5] Heb. x. 9.

not as I will, but as thou *wilt*."[1] But perhaps the broadest and most summary way of stating the teaching of the passage before us, is by saying that what our Lord here enjoins upon his followers is the cultivation of the mind which is in Himself. It is precisely the same injunction (so harmoniously do different Scriptures speak, and yet quite undesignedly on the part of the human writers) which St. Paul gives, under the guidance of inspiration, to his Philippian converts; "*Let* nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (now observe—for it is most noteworthy—what the Apostle intimates the main feature of the mind which is in Christ Jesus to be; the Lord Himself says of Himself in the passage before us, "I am meek and lowly in heart"; and this is the leading feature of Christ's mind according to the Apostle's description of it—its marvellous, incalculable, inconceivable condescension), "who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."[2] And again, it harmonizes with this inspired notice of the mind that is in Christ Jesus, that our Lord, in commending his example to his Apostles, sets forth especially this trait of character, condescension. He

[1] St. Matt. xxvi. 39. [2] Phil. ii. 3 *to* 8.

had stooped to do a menial office for them—to wash their feet—and it was in reference to this act of condescension that He said, "If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."[1]—The cultivation of the mind of Christ, then, is the thing intended by the precept, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." And the most obvious feature of this mind is its condescension—a feature, in imitating which even he who comes nearest to the mark must still be at an infinite distance from it; for what is the condescension of one creature to another compared with the condescension of the Creator, "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God," in taking upon Him the nature of a creature, in order to bless and save a creature? It is even no condescension at all. If a man for some purpose beneficial to the race of earth-worms should consent to become an earth-worm, limiting his powers of movement and of eyesight to those of the tiny reptile; this would be as nothing compared with the condescension of Jesus; for, after all, earth-worm and man are both creatures of God's hand, whereas the Son of God is "uncreate" no less than the Father. But this cultivation of the mind of Christ, when it comes to be, not merely admired as a beautiful moral precept, but taken in hand as a practical matter, as a thing to be done, to be achieved by watchfulness, and prayer, and effort, what a thwarting of the mind of the flesh, of ambition, of vanity, of factious feelings and rivalries, of selfishness and self-indulgence does it involve!

[1] St. John xiii. 14, 15.

But lest the stringency of the precept should be evaded, from the circumstance of its soaring so high above our reach, let us single out two features of the mind which is in Christ, as it presents itself for cultivation in our daily walk and conversation, and look upon the Lord Jesus as saying to each one of us morning by morning, when we approach Him in our daily prayer, "Take this yoke upon you to-day; bear this burden for me and with me to-day." We take upon us the yoke, we will say, when we deny ourselves, and we bear the burden by sympathy. Who can doubt that both self-denial (yea, rather let me say self-sacrifice[1]) and sympathy are elements—nay, most characteristic elements of "the mind that is in Christ Jesus"?

[1] Self-sacrifice represents more exactly than self-denial the idea intended to be conveyed by the Lord's precept in St. Luke ix. 23: "If any *man* will come after me, let him *deny himself*, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Not that "let him deny himself" is other than a literal translation, word for word, of the phrase in the original (ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν), but that in popular parlance self-denial has come to mean something much more superficial, much less thorough-going, than what is obviously denoted by Christ in the passage just quoted. Self-denial, in the sense in which it is an essential condition of coming after the Saviour, is the doing by self what St. Peter did by Christ,—repudiating all connexion with self, disavowing it utterly as our master. "What is *self*-denial?" says Principal Moule, in his most edifying and valuable *Thoughts on Christian Sanctity*. "The word is often and much mistaken in common use, as if it meant much the same as self-control—the control of lower elements of our being by higher . . . but this is not self-denial, as the phrase is used here assuredly by our Lord. Take the New Testament, and try the case by the words 'deny,' 'denial,' in successive passages; I think it will be seen that self-denial is not self-control. In all cases at all in point, 'to deny' much more resembles in idea 'to ignore' than 'to control.' It means to turn the back upon, to shut the eyes to, to treat as non-existent. 'I will deny him' (St. Matt. x. 33); I will say I know him not. 'He cannot deny himself' (2 Tim. ii. 13); He cannot ignore his own hand in his own written promise. 'Let him deny himself'; let him ignore self; let him say to self, I know thee not, thou art nothing to me."—*Thoughts on Christian Sanctity*, pp. 25, 26.

(1) And first, the yoke. The yoke goes over the shoulders of the oxen that draw the wain. It reminds one of the transverse beam of the cross, beneath which the arms of a Saviour's love were extended wide, to draw sinners unto Himself. In the immediately foregoing chapter of this Gospel, our blessed Lord, after teaching that even the domestic affections (the purest and best things in fallen man), even the love of father and mother, of son and daughter, must be mortified when they come into collision with his own claims on our allegiance, had solemnly said, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."[1] And here He says, in complete harmony with that foregoing word, "Take my yoke upon you." And St. Luke's version of the words about the cross fills out the precept, teaching us that by the taking up of the cross is meant self-denial, and that the exercise is to be performed day by day. "He said to *them* all, if any *man* will come after me" (now this is just the counsel for you, who are desiring and intending to serve God, and walk in the Saviour's footsteps, but need instruction how to proceed) "let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow me."[2] Each day, as our Lord here intimates by the word "daily," furnishes many occasions for the exercise of self-denial, that is, for the taking up of the cross, the taking upon us of the yoke. To adopt the division of the old Greek philosopher (and I really know no better), there is the irascible part of our nature (the seat of anger), and the concupiscible part of it (the seat of lust), both of which have to be mortified, if we would tread in the

[1] St. Matt. x. 37, 38. [2] St. Luke ix. 23.

footsteps of the Divine Master. "Be patient toward all *men*,"[1] says the Apostle; and again, "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."[2] But how difficult is it—difficult, that is, to the mind of the flesh—to show this patience, this sweet graciousness of Jesus, even towards the perverse, the tiresome, the impertinent, the disagreeable, those who always touch the sore point in conversation (as many persons have a wonderful dexterity in doing), those whose tone makes us instinctively take up an attitude of defiance to them, like porcupines erecting their quills at the approach of a foe! Yes; it is hard to the flesh, no doubt; but there is a soothing element in the mind of Jesus, which makes every honest attempt to cultivate it a rest to the soul.—And then the appetitive part of our nature, which is often the strongest in men where the irascible element is weakest,—love of ease,—tendencies to over-indulgence in eating and drinking, or in sleep,—how prone are these lower instincts, in the absence of the most vigilant and incessant self-control, and in the neglect of stern self-discipline, to get the mastery over us, instead of our making ourselves masters over them. And even in a tolerably strict life, where little indulgence is accorded to those lower instincts of our nature, do not our Lord's warning words about loving father or mother more than Him show that the specious "idolatry of the domestic affections" (as Edward Irving used to call it) has its roots quick in the heart of man, and that to mortify these also is a part of the yoke, which He requires those who enter upon

[1] 1 Thess. v. 14. [2] Eph. iv. 2.

his service to take upon them,—a cross which He bids them carry after Him.

(2) And then for the bearing of the burden, which we defined to be by sympathy. "Bear ye one another's burdens," says St. Paul, "and so fulfil the law of Christ."[1] How the law of *Christ?* Why is Christ's law specially fulfilled by our bearing the burdens of one another? Because he is the great burden-bearer for all, as it is said, "Who his own self bare our sins" (that was his burden) "in his own body on the tree,"[2] and again, "The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."[3] And not only did He bear upon the cross the burden of human iniquity, but in his holy and immaculate life He bore most lovingly with the infirmities of his disciples, with their ignorance, their dulness, their backwardness to learn, with their abandonment of Him at the moment of his apprehension, their marvellous slowness of heart to believe, even after his resurrection. How lovingly did He consent to bear the obloquy which rested upon them, as it is written, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me!"[4] On which part of his example is founded the Apostle's exhortation, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."[5]

The burden of Christ's people then—the burden of their guilt, of their infirmities, their prejudices, their narrowness of mind, their reproach whether deserved or undeserved, their faults of character, is the "my burden" of which He speaks,—*his* burden, because He Himself bore it in life and death; his also,

[1] Gal. vi. 2. [2] 1 Peter ii. 24. [3] Isaiah liii. 6.
[4] Rom. xv. 3; Psalm lxix. 9. [5] Rom. xv. 1.

because He requires those who come to Him, and to whom He gives rest for only coming, to bear it also,—to bear it for Him, to bear it with Him. And for this bearing the burdens of others every day furnishes its opportunities. The great taint of our corrupt nature is selfishness, and by reason of this taint there is a strong tendency in us all to wrap ourselves in ourselves, giving perhaps a certain proportion of our means to works of piety and charity, but with very little care for or interest in those to whom we give, with none of that considerateness for others, and sympathy with others, which is one main feature of "the mind that is in Christ." Now be it our aim day by day to counteract and mortify this selfishness, and so to bear Christ's burden, and fulfil his law. As on rising we should hear Him saying to us, "Take this yoke upon thee, my child, to-day," "Bear this burden for me and with me to-day," so, before retiring to rest, and collecting our mind for our evening prayer, it were well to put these questions to our conscience; "Have I, in a single instance this day, denied myself either in temper or appetite, and so submitted myself to the Saviour's yoke?" And again, "Have I, in a single instance, shown sympathy or considerateness for others, borne with their faults or infirmities of character, given time or taken trouble to help them or be of use to them?" If so, I have gained ground; I have made an advance in the mind of Christ to-day, if it be only a single step; let me thank God, and take courage. A single step is so much clear gain. A heathen moralist says, "He who has made a beginning is already halfway through the enterprise."[1] And an

[1] *Dimidium facti qui cæpit habet.* Horace, *Ep.* I. ii. 40.

inspired prophet, or rather God Himself, by the mouth of a prophet, hath said, "Who hath despised the day of small things?"[1]

"For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light." Our Divine Master speaks faithfully to us, in not concealing from us that there is a yoke and a burden, to which all his followers must stoop; and yet He speaks most encouragingly and winningly and persuasively, by expressly assuring us of the easiness of the yoke and the lightness of the burden. But how can a yoke be easy, and how can a burden be light? The answer is obvious. It is only to the mind of the flesh, to the instincts and appetites of the old corrupt nature, that the yoke is galling and the burden heavy. But in every man who has been drawn by the Father to Christ, and has been refreshed by Christ's revelation to him of the Father character of God, there is and must be in full exercise another and a higher mind. And in every act of mortification, in every exercise of sympathy, this higher mind finds rest,—it finds the yoke elevating, not depressing, and the burden one which lends wings to the soul. Even good and wise heathens, as might be shown by citations from their writings, had a relish of the pleasantness and peace, of the deep internal repose, which comes from resisting the lower natural instincts, and walking in the calm serene light of that Eternal Reason, which is indeed, though the heathen knew it not, the Personal Word of God, of whom we are told that He is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."[2] So that in his natural conscience and moral sense man, even before he is brought into the

[1] Zech. iv. 10. [2] St. John i. 9.

covenant of grace, has a certain appreciative power of the restfulness of virtue, of the calmness to be found in resistance to temptation. And in the conscious knowledge of Christ and his law, this experience is of course infinitely heightened.

There is a wonderful tenderness in the reason here assigned for our submission to the discipline which Christ proposes to lay upon us; "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; *for* I am meek and lowly in heart." What a force there is in the "for"! As much as to say, "I am no austere moral taskmaster, like scribe or Pharisee, who bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, while they themselves move not the burdens with one of their fingers;[1] but a gracious, considerate Saviour who have myself made experience of every burden, and much more than every burden, which, in conforming them to my image, I lay upon my people, and who know how to adjust every burden to their present strength." But the reason for the easiness of the yoke and the lightness of the burden, which is *implied* in this precious passage, is even better than the reason expressed. The reason implied is (hear it, reader; heed it; treasure it up in thine heart!) that, by the terms of the promise, the Lord puts us in possession of rest—*the rest given*—before He requires us to seek the rest which is to be found by taking upon us the yoke, and bending under the burden. What has become of our sins, then, the great burden upon the minds of all of us? He "his own self" has borne them in "his own body on the tree."[2] The Lamb of God has taken them all away,[3]

[1] *See* St. Matt. xxiii. 4. [2] 1 Peter ii. 24. [3] *See* St. John i. 29.

if we have come to Him in acecptance of his great invitation, and confessed our sins at his footstool in penitence and faith. Thenceforth we need be under no harassing apprehensions respecting them. We are freely forgiven by God, freely accepted by Him, and thenceforth live under the smile of the reconciled Father, the revelation of whose Father character it is which gives us this true refreshment of spirit. We have indeed to work still, but it is working down from the peace given,—the peace of free pardon and acceptance—to a peace found—the peace which results from sanctification. We start from peace with God cemented by the blood of the Cross, to reach peace as the result of spiritual discipline and moral effort. And thus the words receive in us their fulfilment: "The work of righteousness" (Christ's righteousness, the righteousness of justification) "shall be peace" (the rest *given*); "and the effect of righteousness" (the righteousness of sanctification) "quietness and assurance for ever"[1] (the rest *found*).

Yes; the entire sanctification of the Christian in all its details, the government of the temper, of the tongue, of the appetite, the management of time, the effort to be useful and to do good, is all embraced in the two brief but pregnant precepts, "Take my yoke," "Bear my burden." But, as the moral stamina for taking the yoke, and bearing the burden, are to be found only in the rest given, let us see to it that we start with that rest,—I do not mean start with it only at the beginning of our Christian course, but start with it afresh every day and every hour. Loving confidence in a heavenly Father, to whom

[1] Isaiah xxxii. 17.

we have been reconciled by the death of his Son,—this is the secret, and the only secret, of that elasticity of mind, by which alone holiness can be achieved. Seek we this confidence then by coming to the Saviour's feet from day to day, and asking Him to reveal to us, ever more and more clearly, the heavenly Father. The more we apprehend his power, wisdom, love, interest in us, concern for us, sympathy with us, the easier will the yoke become, and the lighter the burden, and the more refreshing and restful will the rest be, which our souls shall find in bearing them.

PART II

THE COUNSEL RESPECTING THE VIRTUES

CHAPTER I

CHRIST'S VIRTUES OF THE FEMININE TYPE

His Son, made of a woman.—GAL. iv. 4.

WE have seen in the preceding Part that the earliest step in the spiritual life, both for the infant and for the adult, is the coming to Christ (the being brought to Him in the infant's case) in pursuance of his own gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In that passage and its context we saw two rests to be spoken of, the first a rest *given*,—"I will *give* you rest"; the second a rest *found*, and found by diligent seeking,—"Ye shall *find* rest unto your souls." This latter rest we defined to consist in the possession of the mind of Christ, an attainment only to be made by strenuous efforts. And we saw that it is indicated in the closing words of the great Invitation, that this mind is a mind of self-sacrifice and a mind of sympathy, self-sacrifice being the yoke to which He exhorts us to submit ourselves, and sympathy the burden which He exhorts us to bear; for it is by sympathy that we "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

But the mind of Christ, summarised by Himself in those two great features of it, the submission to his yoke, and the stooping to his burden,—is set

before us in detail in other passages of Holy Scripture. Indeed it is interesting to observe how lavish and profuse are the delineations of the mind of Christ, which are given us in the New Testament. On some points which are warmly controverted among Christians (say, if you please, the exact nature and effects of the blessing received in the Sacrament of the Eucharist) the Word of God speaks seldom, and when it does speak, darkly ; but because the mind of Christ is the model on which the minds of his people are to be framed, and because Christian life is nothing else than an acting out of the mind of Christ in the daily walk of his followers, Holy Scripture is full and explicit on the subject, and the truth is given us as reflected from the angle of incidence of several minds. Let us briefly review our materials. First, and more important than any mere verbal description, is the portrait of our Blessed Lord (might I not rather call it the photograph, since it is painted under the most brilliant sunlight of Inspiration ?) which the four Evangelists have painted for us, each from his own point of view. They have thus created in the minds of those who study the Gospels with thought and prayer, a conception of our Lord's human mind, sentiments, and character, such as no amount of abstract description could possibly have given us. No mere verbal account of a person's features, given to an artist proposing to make a portrait of him, could be a substitute for making the person himself sit to the artist. It is ours to copy into our characters the features of the mind of Christ ; and that we have Christ Himself exhibited to us by the Evangelists under four different aspects of Him, is the first and

greatest help which God has lent us in this great task. Yes; the first and greatest help, but by no means the only help. Our Lord Himself has portrayed for us the features of his own mind, which He desires to reproduce in us, in the Eight Beatitudes, which, as they stand at the head of the Sermon on the Mount, may be said to be the foundation of Christ's teaching, upon which the whole superstructure of it is laid. But we were to have yet further assistance in a matter of such vital importance to us. Minds merely human, but lifted up for the time being into a higher atmosphere by the Spirit of God, were to give us *their* delineations of the mind that is in Christ. St. Paul has done it by his enumeration of the tempers and dispositions which constitute "the fruit of the Spirit" and by the contrast which he draws between this "fruit" and "the works of the flesh,"—a contrast in which "the works" and "the fruit" reciprocally illustrate one another.[1] And even this is not all. The Apostle of the Circumcision must add his testimony, on the subject of the mind which was in Christ, to that of the Apostle of the Gentiles. He does so in the first Chapter of his second Epistle, where he enumerates the steps of a ladder of Christian graces, the first or lowest step being faith, and the last or topmost charity.[2] Now these three delineations, by the Lord Himself, and by the Holy Ghost speaking through St. Peter and St. Paul respectively, are substantially the same with one another, though varying in particulars, and all three give us the identical conception of Christ that we get from the Gospels. And it stands to reason that in the

[1] *See* Gal. v. 19 *to* 25.

[2] *See* 2 Peter i. 5 *to* 10.

comparison of the three there must be large scope for interesting and edifying thought. It is inconceivable that God should have given us so much help towards the understanding of the most important of all subjects, without intending us to use it and make the most of it.

In placing before the reader that conception of the mind of Christ which we gain from the narratives of the Evangelists, let me say wherein I venture to think that even the standard works upon the Spiritual Life, works of great authority, and which have been signally blessed by God's Spirit, have—I will not say been in error (for I should shrink from the presumption of judging unfavourably what is so much above me)—but seem to me to have fallen short of the mark. A large portion of such works is usually and very properly devoted to the graces of the Christian character. Thus in Bishop Taylor's *Rule and Exercises of Holy Living*, which has had an immense circulation, and has proved an untold help and comfort to thousands of souls, a full half of the work is devoted to the consideration of separate virtues, such as Chastity, Humility, Temperance, Modesty, Contentedness, together with the virtues specially called theological, Faith, Hope, and Charity. The heads under which the different virtues are classified are found by Taylor in St. Paul's words to Titus,—"For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."[1] "The first of these three parts of Christian Religion," says the eloquent writer, "contains all our

[1] Titus ii. 11, 12.

deportment in our personal and private capacities. The second enlarges our duty in all relations to our neighbour. The third contains the offices of direct religion, and intercourse with God." No exception whatever can be taken, either against the exhaustiveness of the treatment of Christian virtue, in the *Holy Living*, or against the reduction of it all to the three heads of the inspired summary, soberness, righteousness, and godliness. But perhaps it is open to a question whether the several graces are not regarded too independently of the great Example which God has proposed to us, whether they are sufficiently looked at as separate elements, only parted off for the sake of distinctness of thought, of the "one mind which was in Christ Jesus." Not that this inherence of all the virtues in the Saviour is for one moment denied or questioned, but only that it does not seem to be put forward or made sufficiently prominent. According to the New Testament, Christ is not only the sum of Christian Doctrine, but of Christian Precept; as we have no hope but in his work, so we have no rule of life but in his mind. And the use of remembering this, and keeping it carefully before us, is that the stream is never cut off from the spring,—that we are thus continually referred to Him who is the source as well as the norm of Christian graces,—Him to whose internal energy St. Paul attributes his whole external life of labour and suffering,—"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[1]

But there is another thought, and one which stands in connexion with the passage at the head of this Chapter, which has perhaps hardly had sufficient

[1] Gal. ii. 20.

prominence given to it in the formal setting forth of the Christian virtues. It is this, that Christ revolutionised the current ideas of virtue, by exemplifying in his life, and inculcating in his teaching, the graces of the woman's character, rather than those of the man. His relationship to humanity was one-sided; for the Son of God was "made of a woman," born of a Virgin,—all that He had of our nature (and we know He had it in its integrity, "spirit, soul, and body") came to Him through a mother. This being the case, we should naturally expect to find Him exhibiting very markedly that side of human character which is especially feminine. "It is with moral qualities," says the late Archdeacon Hare in his *Guesses at Truth* (and it is one of the many happy guesses with which that little volume abounds), "as with flowers; the bright are often poisonous, but I believe never the sweet." The bright moral qualities ("vaulting ambition," for example, "which o'erleaps itself") are those of the man; the sweet ones, modesty, gentleness, submissiveness, are those of the woman. Let any impartial student of the Gospel narratives say by which class of moral qualities the humanity of Christ was most characterised. *Look at the sphere in which He moves.* It is, as far as the conditions of his work allow, that of retirement throughout; man works in the face of day with the eyes of the world upon him; but woman's sphere is or ought to be (oh, my Christian sisters, *it ought to be!*) the home. From boyhood till the age of thirty He was hidden away from the gaze of men, not in the wilderness, like St. John the Baptist, but in the seclusion of the carpenter's shop, subject to his

parents, and helping them to maintain themselves by honest labour. And even when his great ministry was fully opened, and He must needs attract the observation of men, his Evangelists are careful to inform us that He courted secrecy and retirement. "When Jesus perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone."[1] "Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all; and charged them that they should not make him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen. . . . He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."[2] And upon this feature of character in the Saviour the Apostles found their appeals to their converts not to drive them to measures of severity; "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ."[3]—Again, *look at His miracles.* They are not the dazzling wonder-works of Moses and Elijah, which marked themselves ostensibly on the face of Nature, not the turning rivers into blood,[4] or making darkness creep over the noontide sky,[5] or calling down fire from heaven,[6] but domestic works, of which the miracle at the wedding struck the keynote,[7] and works helpful of suffering humanity, almost all of them ministrations at the bedside of suffering, cures accompanied with bright

[1] St. John vi. 15.
[2] St. Matt. xii. 15 *to* 21.
[3] 2 Cor. x. 1.
[4] *See* Exod. vii. 20, 21.
[5] *See* Exod. x. 21, 22, 23.
[6] *See* 2 Kings i. 10, 11, 12.
[7] *See* St. John ii. 1 *to* 12.

cheering words, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity";[1] "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."[2] And thus it came to pass that the main character in which our Lord presented Himself among men was that of a Comforter in trouble; indeed He took to Himself the name of Comforter, when He said to his disciples on the eve of parting from them, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."[3] Whether of the two—men or women—are in their proper element when they make themselves quietly helpful to people, attend sickbeds, relieve suffering, whisper low soothing words of consolation and hope to patients? It is a blessed work, whoever does it; but of which of the two sexes is it the proper and distinguishing function? You say, Of the woman. And therefore the Virgin-born, the Son of God, "made of a woman," must occupy Himself in this, and indeed it must be his life's work. But it will be said that enterprise and exploit on behalf of the down-trodden, heroism in battle, achievement of victory—in short, that the whole group of moral qualities which was so highly appreciated by the ancient heathen that the Greek word for virtue is closely connected with the name of the war-god—that these at least are the virtues of the male sex; and I shall be asked whether Christ be not the mightiest and bravest of heroes, the great Champion of our race against the devil, who trampled that malignant enemy under his own feet, and is trampling and will trample him effectually under the feet of his people? Assuredly. When, after visiting the

[1] St. Luke xiii. 12. [2] St. Matt. ix. 2. [3] St. John xiv. 16.

realm of the dead, the lowest depth, He returned to the highest heaven which had sent Him forth, it was his irresistible prowess, the triumph which He had won over our enemies that the angels celebrated, as they escorted his cloud-chariot onwards; "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle."[1] But mark what sort of triumph it was which they celebrated, and what were the means by which it was won. "Having spoiled principalities and powers," says the Apostle, "he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it"[2] (the cross). Ah, in the cross! it was not a physical triumph, not a triumph of brute force, not the triumph of an overmastering will backed by an irresistible power. Nothing would have been easier than such a triumph to the omnipotence of the Son of God, had He cared to win it. He might either have annihilated the evil spirits who had worked man's fall, or, at the head of legions of good angels, chased them back to the bottomless pit, and sealed them up there for ever in bonds and darkness, permitting to them no further access to the earth. But no; it was a moral triumph of which He was in quest; for God had made man a moral creature, who could not otherwise be won than by carrying the fortress of his will. The battle with such a will was a moral battle; the conquest of it could not be achieved by exploit; could not otherwise be achieved than by suffering. "It was by his meekness in the bearing of the wrong" (to quote a striking modern ser-

[1] Psalm xxiv. 7, 8. [2] Col. ii. 15.

mon[1]); "it was by his patience; it was by his gentleness; it was by his goodness; it was by his long-suffering; it was by his obedient self-surrender; it was by his self-sacrifice even unto death—the death of a slave upon a malefactor's cross—that Jesus overcame the evil that was in the world, and, in triumphing over it, won men back again to the love of goodness and of God. But meekness, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, obedient self-surrender, lowly self-sacrifice,—these are the virtues of which the woman, not the man, is the exemplar and the type. It was these virtues which the Lord Jesus, in the economy of the Incarnation, raised to a position of moral supremacy unknown in the history of the world before; and by making them in a peculiar sense his own, won for woman the position which she holds to-day in every Christian land. We claim, then, and we desire to have the distinctive nature of our claim clearly understood,—we claim that Christianity, by virtue of a mysterious Divine economy peculiar to itself, has been the means of introducing a new moral order into the world, and that, too, our enemies themselves being judges. 'In antiquity,' says Mr. Lecky, 'the virtues that were most admired were always those which were distinctly masculine. None of the virtues that were highly

[1] Preached before the Annual Convention of the Diocese of New York in 1882 by the Rev. Thomas Richey, D.D. This sermon, however, is only known to me by the extract from it in Dr. Morgan Dix's *Calling of a Christian Woman and her training to fulfil it*, an American work, but published in London by Dickinson, 89 Farringdon Street. These six lectures by Dr. Dix, the Rector of Trinity Church, New York, are an excellent antidote for one of the worst evils of our times, and I trust will have as wide a circulation in our country as they deserve, and as doubtless they have already had in the United States. The passage in Dr. Richey's sermon, which I have quoted at second hand, will be found in Lecture II. of Dr. Dix's book, pp. 36, 37, 38, 39, of the new Edition.

prized were virtues distinctly or pre-eminently feminine.' "

Now what I venture to question is whether "the new moral order introduced by Christianity," to which attention is called in the above striking and eloquent passage, has been recognised as much as it should have been in those spiritual books, which treat of Christian virtues and the method of cultivating them. Christian virtues are nothing else than the features of the mind of Christ as exhibited to us in the Gospel narratives. And the first point which strikes us as observable in this mind, is that its most characteristic virtues are of a stamp never appreciated—indeed rather thought light of and looked down upon—before the Advent. What heathen moral philosopher ever put poverty of spirit, meekness, mercifulness, purity, peacemaking, endurance of persecution for righteousness' sake, in the forefront of his catalogue of virtues, as God's Son, the Seed of the woman, did? This would have been to ante-date a grand conception, before it had been thrown into the mind of man by being acted out under his eyes.

Enough has been said of the mind of Christ as exhibited in the Gospels. Its delineation by the Lord Himself in the Beatitudes must stand over for consideration in future Chapters.

But this Chapter must not conclude without our adverting to one of the incidental bearings of the present subject—its bearing on the painful, distressing, nay, I must say revolting, social phenomena of the present day. Nobody can have watched these phenomena carefully without seeing that Society from head to foot is undergoing a rapid disintegration—

that the old forms of it are being broken up by a levelling process which is going on everywhere. It is not only in the political sphere that this levelling is seen ; that is a surface aspect of it ; it goes lower down, and affects interests far more vital in the circle of the family and the home. The Fifth Commandment is freely set at nought. Though you cannot altogether kill filial affection in the hearts of children, the honour, reverence, and submission prescribed by God's precept is out of date. But deeper still, as many sad indications show, does this social revolution penetrate ; it touches the fundamental relationship of all—that between the sexes. The Scriptural and wholesome restraints upon marriage, under which we were brought up, have become intolerably irksome. To regard the relations of a man's wife as his own is, whatever God may say about "one flesh," an obsolete superstition which ought to be swept away. New facilities are given for divorce, of which the children of this world avail themselves with as light a heart as that with which they terminate their engagement with a servant.

And when you probe these festering sores of Society to the depth, you find at the bottom this appalling fact, that *Society has determined to unsex the woman*, to confuse male and female, to give the woman man's work to do, and of course (it follows by logical necessity) to train and educate her for that work by the same studies with which men are trained and educated. The present writer believes that God abhors all this confusion of things, which He has made essentially distinct, and each of which has its own comeliness, its own dignity, its own special use,

so long—but so long only—as it confines itself to its own sphere. He finds an indication of this abhorrence in a precept of the Old Dispensation (a precept which, though dealing with things external, had yet, like all the precepts of the Law, a deep principle underlying it): "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God."[1] It is not to be wondered at, if we should observe in modern society a tendency among women to violate the letter of this precept. This violation of the letter proceeds no doubt, though all unconsciously to themselves, from that violation of the spirit of it, which has made such fearful progress among us of late. If women are to do the work which God made men to do, neglecting their own special province, and to be educated, not with an education equally good of its kind (for that they have an undoubted right to claim), but identical with that of the other sex; if they are to jostle against men as rivals in the competition for this world's honours and emoluments,—it is only to be expected that the unsexing, which has penetrated thus far into their moral and intellectual nature, should give symptoms of itself in their attire, and that such godly admonitions of Christ's Apostles as this, "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, . . . if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering,"[2] should be regarded as old-world precepts, worthy only of the days of the Church's infancy, and quite out of date in this enlightened age of progress and unbelief,

[1] Deut. xxii. 5. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 14, 15.

when we are all, as we are never tired of saying, in the van of Civilisation. Christian sisters, when you have quite left your own province, and made a successful inroad upon that of men, when you have become ambitious like men, argumentative like men, hard like men, bold and forward like men, flippant and noisy like men, where will home be? where all the sweet charities of the domestic hearth, upon which you will have turned your backs? Indeed one might almost say that the unsexing, if it should spread wide and prevail extensively, is likely to work its own cure; for as man has hitherto found life to be unliveable without woman, so he will henceforth begin to find it unliveable with her. But we will put aside that consideration. We will employ one which we well know will have more weight with you. It was your virtues, Christian sisters, not those of man, which the Son of God took into union with his eternal Godhead, which He faithfully exemplified in his life, which He constantly inculcated in his teaching. Are you going to turn your back upon the very virtues which He so pointedly recommended, and to cultivate another mind which you think to be more stirring, more independent, more lofty, more aspiring, than his? "God forbid," you say. Well, I say so too. Yes! God forbid; and may He teach us all, men and women, that the true wisdom, the true dignity, the true happiness is to answer his end in our creation, to fill up the exact sphere which in his providence He has assigned to us, without thrusting ourselves into another and what we conceive to be a nobler one,—in those plain, old-fashioned words which were made to ring in our ears in our childhood,

and which, if they were laid to heart and acted out, would prove a specific for many of the worst evils of the age—"to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me."[1]

[1] *Church Catechism*, "My duty towards my neighbour."

CHAPTER II

POVERTY OF SPIRIT

He opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.—St. Matt. v. 2, 3.

In our last Chapter we considered the mind of Christ, as it is exhibited to us in the portrait which the four Evangelists have sketched of Him, and saw that the constituent virtues of that mind are of the feminine rather than the masculine type. We now turn to consider the mind of Christ, as it is delineated by the Lord Himself in the Eight Beatitudes, with which He opens his Sermon on the Mount. These Beatitudes are commended to us (if indeed any commendation of them were necessary) by the Evangelist's employment of the Scriptural phrase, which is used in describing the utterance of any words of unusual weight and impressiveness,—"he opened his mouth." When taunted, reviled, struck, scourged, pierced, our blessed Lord "opened *not* his mouth," but "was like a lamb dumb before her shearers."[1] But He freely unsealed his lips to teach, and when He did so, it was like the opening of a fountain of the water of life. "He opened his mouth, and taught

[1] *See* Isaiah liii. 7.

them, saying." I do not remember that the phrase is elsewhere used of any part of our Lord's teaching, memorable and weighty as all of it was.

We have said that our Lord in the Beatitudes delineates for us his own mind. A few words more are wanted to make this statement entirely accurate. He here delineates his own mind, not as it existed in Himself, but as it is transferred by Divine grace into the minds of his people, according to that word of St. Paul's, "We have the mind of Christ."[1] While the mind is substantially one and the same in the Master and in the servants, the transference cannot but make some modifications in it, arising from the sinfulness and infirmity of the minds into which it is transferred. In us the virtue, though not fundamentally a different one, frequently assumes a different aspect. Sunlight passing through stained glass takes a tinge from the medium through which it passes, and yet is sunlight still.

We observe in the first place that there are eight Beatitudes, the promise to the last, however, being exactly the same as that to the first. Seven is a perfect number in Holy Scripture—a number which represents completeness, fulness, that wherein there is no lack, as where it is said that "a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again."[2] This notion of completeness, as indicated by the number seven, is probably derived from the Mosaic account of the Creation, where we read that the works were finished in six days, and that on the seventh day "God rested from all his work which he had made."[3] And probably there is some basis in nature for the notion

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 16. [2] Prov. xxiv. 16. [3] Gen. ii. 2.

of completeness as inherent in the number seven. There are seven notes in the gamut, the eighth or octave being the same note as the first, only in a higher or lower pitch. Here is a parallel in nature to the first and eighth Beatitude, to both of which the same blessing is annexed ("for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"), but the virtue of the eighth—the being persecuted for righteousness' sake—is of a higher pitch than poverty of spirit—it represents poverty of spirit under the severest strain the world can put upon it.

Like the Ten Commandments, and like the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes fall into two groups. The first four exhibit the different stages of the development of the spiritual mind. The last four exhibit its outward deportment, the attitude which it takes up towards what it finds in the world, misery, moral impurity, dissension, and lastly opposition to righteousness and truth. To bear in mind this outline of what may be called the argument of the Beatitudes will help us much in harmonizing them with the Christian tempers which St. Paul calls "the fruit of the Spirit," and with the graces which St. Peter bids men add to their faith.

Before entering on the first group of Beatitudes it only remains to be said that the several virtues are not isolated, but have a living relation to one another. All the Beatitudes are wrapped up in and grow out of the first, as a flower out of a seed. Or, to take another and perhaps more apposite illustration, as the white light of the sun is decomposed by the prism or by the drops of rain into the seven primary colours which constitute light, so these virtues are all contained in the first of them, poverty of

spirit, and are unfolded out of that virtue, one after another, in the progress of the spiritual life.

"Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." The first or fundamental virtue is humility, and it needs not to be said that it resides eminently in the Saviour Himself, and cannot flow down into his members but from Him. Observe that "lowliness of heart," which is exactly equivalent to poverty of spirit, just because it is the fundamental grace of all, is one of those in which our Lord, in his great invitation to the "weary and heavy laden," proposes Himself as our model, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." How was this divine lowliness of heart manifested? By his extraordinary condescension, first, in taking upon Him the nature of man, and then further humbling Himself in man's service, and for man's behoof, to live a life of toil and drudgery, and die a death of ignominy and cruel pain, "despised and rejected of men."[1] The first of these condescensions the Apostle to the Philippians describes as an "emptying Himself"[2]—a laying aside for the time being of all manifestations of Godhead, of all those visible glories which He had with the Father "before the world was,"[3] just as, before He performed that action symbolical of his wondrous condescension, the washing his disciples' feet, He "laid aside his garments."[4] And the same Apostle speaks elsewhere of the same subject thus; "Ye know the grace" (mind of love)

[1] *See* Isaiah liii. 3.

[2] Phil. ii. 7. ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε: translated "made himself of no reputation" in the Authorised Version, but (more literally) "emptied himself" in the Revised.

[3] *See* St. John xvii. 5.

[4] *See* St. John xiii. 4.

"of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich" (rich in all the splendours and all the homage which surround the throne of God), "yet for your sakes he became poor" (poor not only in earthly circumstances, being dependent upon the alms of those to whom He preached,[1] and sometimes having nowhere to lay his head,[2] but poor as possessed of a creature-nature, momentarily dependent, as all creature-natures are and must be, upon God), "that ye through his poverty might be rich"[3] (rich in the gold of precious faith,[4] and therefore in all the graces which faith is the means of procuring). And this self-emptying and poverty of spirit, manifested by the Master, is to pass into the minds of the disciples by grace, and to become theirs also. "Let nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory," says St. Paul; "but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves," and then adds, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God" (having God's nature), "counted it not a prize"[5] (a thing to be grasped) "to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself,"—and then come the stages of the self-emptying or abasement just set forth, the lowest depth of it being reached in "the death of the cross." "Let

[1] *See* St. Luke viii. 3.

[2] *See* St. Matt. viii. 20; St. Luke ix. 58.

[3] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

[4] *See* Rev. iii. 18.

[5] I give the Revised Version here. I prefer it to the Authorised ("thought it not robbery to be equal with God") because the antithesis of the following clause is thus maintained; "He thought not his equality with God a thing to be eagerly clung to, but emptied Himself of those visible divine glories, which He had in his pre-existent state from all eternity." If the Authorised Version is to be accepted, "He accounted equality with God no usurpation of a dignity to which He had no right by nature," the antithesis of what follows seems to be destroyed.

this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." But it must be evident that, in passing into our minds, the humiliation ought to take another and a deeper tinge, which in Him it cannot have, inasmuch as we are sinners, conceived in sin, and actual transgressors of God's law. If the sinless One, who bare our sins indeed, but without being implicated in them, humbled Himself to the lowest depth of humiliation, should not we much more do this who are so implicated? Let us abase ourselves then, and condescend to do even the humblest offices of love for others (according to that word of his own, "If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet"[1]); however low we stoop, we shall always be at an infinite distance from his Divine condescension, not only because in our case it is only one creature stooping to another; but also because, however much the person condescending may be in certain points (station, wealth, intelligence, education) above him to whom the condescension is shown, both stand on the same level in this respect, that both are sinners. And, in speaking of condescension as shown by one human creature to another, it should be further observed that, strange as it may seem at first sight to say so, there is a condescension from man to man which, so far from being an indication of poverty of spirit or lowliness of heart, is merely another form of pride. When rich men stoop to poor men, or the noble to men of low estate, and even help them and do them services, the stooping itself is sometimes an aliment which feeds and nourishes pride. There is a certain

[1] St. John xiii. 14.

ostentatiousness in the good deed, which vitiates it morally—it has something of the spirit of the Pharisee blowing a trumpet before him when he does alms in the synagogues and in the streets, that he may have glory of men.[1] And, very much short of this, there may be a secret gratification of vanity in giving largely and liberally to the relief of distress—we have the means, we do not feel the loss of what we give, and we plume ourselves upon it, and stand the better in our own eyes—the very reverse this of poverty of spirit. Such false condescension, such spurious liberality, is at once condemned by a reference to the condescension of the Master. First, his condescension was in a spirit of sympathy, and was prompted by, and indeed was the outcome of, sympathy. And next, his condescension involved self-sacrifice; it led Him to give *Himself* for us, not anything external to Himself with which He could dispense. The condescension of man to man should be tried by these two tests if its genuineness is to be ascertained; first, is there sympathy in it? and next, is there self-sacrifice in it? If not, it has not the true ring; it is not Christ's condescension.

Christ's condescension involved an emptying of Himself. And this self-emptying was done before God, under the eye of the heavenly Father, and with a view to the furtherance of his service and glory in man's salvation. Now the first and fundamental step in spiritual life is that the sinner should become, in his own consciousness and inner convictions, empty before God of everything that can recommend him to God,—of righteousness, wisdom,

[1] *See* St. Matt. vi. 1, 2.

strength—that he should have a genuine sense of spiritual need, according to that profound word to the Laodicean Church ; " Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."[1] Upon this sense of spiritual need, engendering poverty of spirit or lowliness of heart, the whole subsequent spiritual life is based, it is all developed out of this one grace. We might have thought that the spiritual life would be traced back by Christ to repentance as its initial act. But we are taught in the Beatitudes that there is a still earlier stage. " Poverty of spirit " comes before " mourning." The soul must recognise its emptiness, even of an acceptable penitence, and look to God to work such penitence in it as He Himself will accept.

Pride and ambition were at the root of man's fall. It was by the prospect which the tempter held out to Eve, " Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods," [2] that she was seduced to eat the fruit. And the beginning of the recovery must be in lowliness of heart and poverty of spirit ; the mind of Christ, as depicted by prophetic anticipation in Psalm cxxxi. must transfuse itself into the mind of the disciple—" Lord, I am not high-minded : I have no proud looks. I do not exercise myself in great matters : which are too high for me " (Christ

[1] Rev. iii. 17, 18. [2] *See* Gen. iii. 5.

left Cæsar and his empire alone; his kingdom was not of this world[1]). "But I refrain my soul, and keep it low, like as a child that is weaned from his mother: yea, my soul is even as a weaned child."[2]

It should be added that there is no grace in respect of which it is easier and commoner for men to deceive themselves than this of humility. The depreciating ourselves in words before others is apt to make us think ourselves humble. But this self-depreciation is a great snare, being in fact, though half unconsciously in those who use it, a device for eliciting commendation from others, a trap set to catch praise, and therefore, so far from flattering us into a conceit of our humility, it should serve to show us how proud we are. Bitterly should we often resent it, if those to whom we disparage ourselves were to turn upon us and say, "I never thought you had this or that power, this or that virtue; you were always, as you say, quite destitute of it." No! the whole question as regards the foundation of our spiritual life is, not whether we affect humility, but whether we have it, not whether we speak its language, but whether we are under the influence of its spirit. And perhaps there is no test of this so crucial as the question how far we are willing to be, in the eyes and estimate of men, exactly what we are in God's eyes and estimate. Oh, that passion for human esteem which has its roots so quick in the hearts of all of us, how it taints all our virtues at the spring!

"For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Sermons usually commence with and are founded upon texts.

[1] *See* St. John xviii. 36. [2] Psalm cxxxi. 1, 2, 3. P.B.V.

Our Lord adopted this practice once for all, when He opened his commission in the synagogue of Nazareth. And what was his text, which He there read out from the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah? As He unrolled the scroll, his eye lighted upon this passage, which seemed to offer itself to Him as the text of his whole Ministry (a kind of *sors Biblica*, or let us rather say a Providential contingency, reminding one of the passage from the same prophet, which St. Philip the Deacon found the Ethiopian nobleman reading aloud in his chariot); "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor."[1]

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven,"—this is the Gospel which the Lord preached to the poor, in execution of his commission. And his Apostle St. James echoes Him, when he says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith" ("the poor of this world"—not all "the poor of this world" are "poor in spirit also"; but literal poverty is the outward visible sign of which poverty in spirit is the inward spiritual grace; and also, as a fact, the primitive believers, and at the head of them the Apostles, were for the most part poor men: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*"[2]), "and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"[3] Into the hearts of those who are consciously empty of wisdom, righteousness, strength, and of everything which could recommend them to God, the kingdom shall enter now, and become theirs

[1] St. Luke iv. 17, 18. [2] *See* 1 Cor. i. 26. [3] James ii. 5.

in present possession, that they may enter into it hereafter. The Sermon on the Mount should take its interpretation as much as possible from within itself; and we may regard the kingdom therefore as comprising, and having for its constituent elements, the blessings enumerated in the six following Beatitudes:—consolation, the inheritance of the earth, spiritual satisfaction, mercy, the beatific vision of God, and last, but not least, (for there is no sweeter, no loftier blessing accessible to man), Divine sonship. All these things are covenanted to the poor in spirit, and are to be embraced by them in the progress of the spiritual life, as the fundamental grace in them unfolds itself in its seven fair blossoms.

We cannot pass away from this first Beatitude, which has led us to a general survey of the whole series of Christian graces, without asking, "Where in the Beatitudes is faith?" We notice its absence, or apparent absence, with some surprise. Faith is constantly spoken of in the New Testament as the grace which lies at the foundation of the spiritual life. St. Peter recognises it as the foundation-grace, when he bids us "add to our faith" (the "precious faith" which he had just said that we obtain from God; literally, "which falls to our lot from God,"[1] indicating that there is no merit in faith, that it is a gift of grace) "virtue, and to virtue knowledge,"[2] and so forth. Where then does this grace make its appearance in the Beatitudes? It should be remem-

[1] τοῖς ἰσότιμον ἡμῖν λαχοῦσι πίστιν.—2 Pet. i. 1.
[2] *See* 1 Pet. i. 5 *et seq.*

bered that any *explicit* mention of faith, as the grace out of which all others grow, would have been inconsistent with the point of the Dispensation at which our Lord Himself stood. It was not until He had "given himself a ransom for all" that the "due time" had come for the Apostolic testimony to Him as the great object of faith (*see* 1 Tim. ii. 6). Then and not till then, was the time for faith to be set forth explicitly as the basis of all Christian virtues.—But it is equally true that faith is found *implicitly* in the Beatitudes, and found just where we should expect to find it—at the beginning. For the true and saving faith is merely a receiving out of Christ's fulness the supply of all our spiritual wants. But so long as we are not empty of self in every shape—of self-righteousness, self-strength, self-will,—so long there is no possibility of receiving. The first Beatitude therefore is the blessing upon self-emptiness; "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

The summary lesson of this Beatitude is that the foundation of the spiritual life is laid deep in poverty of spirit, or, in other words, in lowliness of heart. And this poverty of spirit is a transplantation into the disciple's mind of that incomparable loving condescension in the Master's, which brought Him down from heaven, and moved Him to take our nature and in it to suffer and to die. Does there appear to you, reader, to be something mysterious here, something which, however edifying it may be, we shall in vain seek to probe to the bottom, and clearly to explain? To me it seems so. I am deeply persuaded that the rationalist's attempt to banish

mystery from the doctrines and precepts of God's Word is as vain as the kindred attempt to banish miracle from its narratives. And in confirmation of this view, I close this Chapter with a profound passage from Isaac Williams, when speaking of our Lord's maxim, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."[1] "Many are the forms of humility, or the ways in which it shows itself, which our Lord sets forth in different parables; on this occasion it is taking the lowest place at a feast; at another, it is one who in prayer stands afar off, not daring to lift up his eyes to heaven; in another, it is one who comes with the words, 'Father, I am not worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants'; in another parable, it is one who, even at the last Day, says with surprise, 'Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and ministered unto thee?' as if quite unconscious of any good in himself that should claim so great reward. . . . There seems some great mystery on this subject of humility, as connected with our justification, with the atonement of Christ and our faith. Perhaps the less we say to explain it, the less likely we shall be to fall into error; for it is one on which the most wise have fallen, but the meek will be guided aright in the way of peace. All that we know is, that there is nothing which our Blessed Lord has so laboured to inculcate upon us, as this one grace of humility; or rather, not as one grace, but as that without which there can be no grace whatever in the soul on which God looks with approbation. By his example, by his par-

[1] Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14.

ables, by precepts and exhortations without number, He has declared to us the infinite importance of it. No words, therefore, can possibly express of what moment it is to each one of us that we labour after it."[1]

[1] *Sermons on the Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays and Holy Days throughout the year,*" by the Rev. Isaac Williams, B.D. [Vol. II. pp. 216, 217. *New Edition.*] Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

CHAPTER III

MOURNING

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.—
St. Matt. v. 4.

We are now engaged, it will be remembered, in tracing the various features of the mind of Christ, as they are portrayed for us in the Beatitudes, and in noticing how the several virtues pass from the mind of the Divine and sinless Master, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, into the minds of the sinful disciples, "like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing" (what are these Beatitudes but a series of blessings upon the various features of the spiritual mind?), "*even* life for evermore."[1]

"Blessed are they that mourn." Certainly the Divine Master Himself was a lifelong mourner,—"a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."[2] These last words are so familiar to us, that they have come to be upon our tongues without stirring thought in our minds. Let us endeavour to realise

[1] Psalm cxxxiii. 2, 3. [2] Isaiah liii. 3.

them. It has been truly observed that our Lord, though represented as having been subject to every emotion of our nature, is never in a single instance said to have laughed or smiled. It was altogether out of keeping with his mission, and with his character as the Sin-bearer, that he should have laughed or smiled. Now think what that must have been. How intolerable a burden would life be without those snatches of innocent merriment, with which our heavenly Father graciously permits it, even on the dullest and most careworn day, to be relieved. Ordinary life, when the first freshness and brightness of youth has passed off, is a great strain to almost all of us. The anxieties, the trials of patience and temper involved in it,—none the lighter because they happen to be small teasing trials, and by no means grave or dignified,—exert a pressure upon minds at all susceptible, as uniform and continuous as the physical pressure of gravitation ; but when to this is added the earnest effort and constant watchfulness demanded by the spiritual life, and by the service of God in the way of our calling, the strain then becomes too heavy to bear without those occasional gleams of brightness which shoot athwart the path of all of us from the occasional humour and frolic, which Shakspere has so truly represented as always lying side by side with the tragedy and the pathos of human existence. The Lord's career, although the deep shadows of it were not, as I shall presently notice, without some bright lights, yet had none of these *lower* alleviations ; it was not consistent with the position held by Him in the kingdom of God, and with the work which He had undertaken in

our behalf, that it should have. But what was it that caused Him to be the Sufferer of sufferers,—pre-eminently, and above all other partakers of our nature, "the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief"? Beyond all doubt, the sin which He came to expiate. The prophet gives the account of the sorrows and the grief in the very next verse to that in which he thus designates the Saviour; "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."[1] Having taken upon Him, not a human personality, but the human nature common to all of us, He bore the sins of the whole world by that highly mysterious arrangement which the New Testament calls imputation: "God hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin,"[2] regarded and dealt with the Sinless One, so long as he sustained the character of the Sin-bearer, as if he had been guilty of every sin committed by each one of us: can we wonder that deep shadows, relieved but by few lights, lay along his path, and that he was the Mourner of mourners?

But perhaps it will suggest itself as a difficulty to some of my readers that, as our Blessed Lord was altogether "void of sin, both in his flesh and in his spirit,"[3] as He not only never committed sin but had it not in Him to commit it, as there was nothing in his consciousness to charge sin home upon Him, as He could say, and did say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?",[4] "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,"[5]—therefore He cannot have felt the burden of sin, its horrible tend-

[1] Isaiah liii. 4.
[2] *See* 2 Cor. v. 21. And see *v.* 19, "*not imputing* their trespasses unto them."
[3] Article xv.
[4] St. John viii. 46.
[5] St. John xiv. 30.

ency, as separating the soul from God, its ghastly consequences, as resulting in death and every form of suffering,—as sinners feel it. You quite understand remorse, shame, and a "certain fearful looking for of judgment"[1] as being a heavy burden upon a sinner's heart; but how, you ask, can a sin in which He was not implicated have been any burden upon the heart of the "holy, harmless, undefiled" One, who was "separate from sinners"?[2] We can offer no other answer than the words of the Apostle just quoted, "He hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin,"[3]—identified Him with sin, looked at Him, while He was fulfilling his engagements as our surety, not as He was in Himself, but through the dark cloud of human iniquity, and dealt with Him accordingly. And though there is much that is highly mysterious in such a transaction, and which we must content ourselves with taking simply, without endeavouring fully to understand it, yet there is a point of view, by placing ourselves at which we can entirely recognise the awfulness of sin to Christ, and the horror, aversion, and loathing with which it must have inspired Him. We have only to bear in mind the fact, upon which indeed the difficulty turns, that He Himself "knew no sin," stood clear of it altogether. It is a well-known moral phenomenon that by committing sin we harden our hearts to it, contract a fatal insensibility to its mischief and danger; —to perpetrate it is, by the operation of an unavoidable moral law, acting with all the certainty and regularity of a natural law, to extenuate it, to make light of it, to think it excusable. But imagine a Person

[1] *See* Heb. x. 27. [2] *See* Heb. vii. 26. [3] 2 Cor. v. 21.

never sullied with sin by the faintest consent of his will to it (which was our Lord's case), and you imagine one who is infinitely susceptible to its loathsomeness and horror, and to the piteousness of the condition of those who have fallen into it. We all know what sensitiveness to bodily pain is. We are all more or less thus sensitive. The nerves of sensation are distributed in a delicate network over the surface of the body, and present a thousand inlets for acute suffering, of which the torturers of an age happily gone by knew how to avail themselves, in eliciting from their unhappy victims such secrets as it was desired to arrive at. Now a moral agent perfectly pure, as our Blessed Lord was, would shrink from sin as sensitively as we all of us do from bodily torture; by virtue of his purity it would be to Him something as odious, as horrible, as intolerable, in the higher part of human nature, as physical suffering in the lower. And add to this the further supposition that the moral agent in question has a heart brimful of love and pity—nay, that He is Love itself, Love "manifest in the flesh" (which also was our Lord's case, for He is a Person in the Godhead); and it seems to follow, as a conclusion which cannot be escaped from, that the case of sinners must inspire such a Person not only with a horror of the evil which has found its way into their nature, but with a burning and yearning desire to rescue them from that evil. Let so much be said then of the Divine Master, as mourning on account of human sin, and of the dark shadows which that mourning must have thrown over his human mind. Here is his plaint in the Psalms, in anticipation of what his

Incarnation had in store for Him ; "I go mourning all the day long."[1]

Before we trace the passage of this feature of character into the minds of his disciples, let me point out that the Lord was a mourner, not only as having, in the economy of the Divine Dispensation, to bear the burden of human sin, but also as having been subjected all his life long to the discipline of sanctified sorrow. This aspect of what He was called upon to undergo, we could not have dared to assert, had we not the express warrant of Holy Scripture for it: "It became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings";[2] and again: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered ; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."[3] Let it be clearly understood that the "being made perfect" here spoken of does not mean being made morally pure (that our Lord was from the first moment that He was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the blessed Virgin[4]) ; but only the becoming morally complete, and the being consecrated through

[1] Psalm xxxviii. 6. [2] Heb. ii. 10. [3] Heb. v. 8, 9.

[4] If it be asked how a sinless humanity could be taken from a sinner, the only answer that can be given is contained in that Article of the Apostles' Creed, "Conceived by the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost could only take from the maternal substance such elements as were befitting to the Incarnate Son, *and would purify them in taking*." See Canon Mason's *Faith of the Gospel* (Rivingtons, 1888) p. 115. The attempt to escape from the difficulty by the modern dogma of St. Mary's own Immaculate Conception is ably exposed by Canon Mason, pp. 114-117.

a discipline, made necessary by the laws of that humanity which He condescended to assume. First, *the becoming morally complete.* The humanity of Christ, after it had made experience of suffering, was a more highly elaborated moral structure—a moral structure wrought up to a more exquisite finish, than it could have been without such discipline. A piece of Parian marble may be perfectly veinless, and without flaw, before the sculptor sets to work on it with his chisel and graving tool. But when he has fashioned it into a vase or beautiful statue, destined to stand in the palace of princes, it is then a completer and more highly finished object than it was as it came from the quarry.—But the Greek word here used implies not only completeness, but priestly consecration, and is rendered "consecrated" in that verse of the seventh Chapter to the Hebrews;[1] "The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." Just as the consecrated pathway of a burial ground gives access to the church which stands in the midst of it, so suffering is the consecrated pathway by which alone sinful humanity can reach God's glory ("we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God"[2]); and the Divine Master, who took—not indeed sinful humanity, but—humanity subject to the natural and moral conditions into which sin had brought it, Himself must need walk along the pathway.

II. We now come to trace the passage of this grace of mourning into the mind of the disciple.

[1] Verse 28. [2] *See* Acts xiv. 22.

The disciple being sinful, and having committed sin, the first shape which in his mind the mourning for sin will take is that of repentance, which the Apostle describes in 2 Cor. vii., as having its source in, and flowing from, godly sorrow.[1] It is a characteristic feature of the sorrow which works and issues in repentance, that it shall be "godly." For there may be a sorrow for sin, as the Apostle instructs us in the passage referred to, which is "of the world"—worldly, and which works and tends to death, not to life,—to natural death in certain cases (as where bankruptcy, and the inevitable exposure of dishonest courses, have often goaded a ruined man to suicide), to spiritual death in all. The world's sorrow for sin is that which arises from the worldly consequences which it has entailed,—loss of health, or loss of property, or loss of character. Godly sorrow, on the other hand, is that which arises either from the dread of God's displeasure, regarded as a righteous Judge, or still more from the consciousness of having sinned against his love, and grieved a loving and reconciled Father. This is mourning in the spirit, or with the spiritual faculty; for we carry on the words of the preceding Beatitude "in the spirit" into this, and understand them as qualifying and characterizing the mourning, no less than the poverty; "Blessed are they that mourn *in spirit*." And lest we should deceive ourselves as to our possession of this godly sorrow—this mourning "according to God,"[2] or after his mind,—the sentiments which it engenders in the heart, and which are the constituent elements of true repentance, are enumerated by the Apostle. They

[1] *See* 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. [2] Ἡ κατὰ Θεὸν λύπη. 2 Cor. vii. 10.

are (1) carefulness,—earnestness in avoiding sin for the future; (2) clearing of ourselves,—an apology to man, where man has been injured or scandalized, and a confession to God in all cases, with full purpose of amendment of life; (3) indignation against self for the folly, baseness, and ingratitude of the sin; (4) fear of God's judgment, and dread of offending Him in future; (5) vehement desire,—yearning for perfect reconciliation with Him; (6) zeal, in approving to Him the sincerity of our penitence; (7) revenge upon the lusts, which have led us astray, and have hazarded our salvation. All the above are so many tests, by which we may try our mourning for our individual sin, and ascertain whether or not it be according to the mind of Christ. Observe, however, that perhaps the most crucial of all tests will be the degree in which we mourn for that sin in the world around us, in which we are not personally implicated. In repentance, as we must experience it,[1] our Lord had no share whatever, seeing that in Him was no sin to be repented of. Nevertheless, the sin of the world, as we have seen, threw a dark shadow over his human mind, and made Him go mourning all the day long. And there were found among his own true people, even under the Old Dispensation, with all its dim light and comparatively scanty religious advantages, those who mourned for sin, without being personally implicated in it,—mourned for the havoc

[1] I have added the words, "as *we* must experience it," in order not altogether to exclude the theory of a vicarious repentance of Christ for the whole human race (as set forth by Mr. Campbell of Row in his celebrated work on the Atonement) which always appears to me to have much truth in it, although I can by no means accept it as the whole account of the Atonement, or as a substitute for the ordinary view of vicarious endurance of penalty.

which it had made among human souls and bodies, for the dishonour done by it to God's Name and cause. Witness the Psalmist's plaint in the 119th Psalm (verse 136)—"Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." Witness again the direction given in Ezekiel's vision to the man with the writer's inkhorn by his side, which indicates that even in the worst period of Jerusalem's history there were many, who, like Daniel, confessed and bewailed, not their own sin only, but the sin of God's people Israel: "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."[1] Nay, does it not follow from what has been said, that the more a man stands clear of his own sin and disentangles himself from it by a true repentance,—the more he passes out of sin's atmosphere into the atmosphere of righteousness,—the more alive will he become to its evil, and danger, and spiritual consequences, and the more desirous to deliver others from its burden and bondage? It argues but a low estimate of sin, if we are only concerned about our own implication in it, and are not stirred to sorrow, or fear, or indignation, when it is freely committed under our eyes.

And it need hardly be said that as the Christian mourns, both over the sin in his own heart, and the sin of a fallen world (and would not be in keeping with a fallen world if he did not so mourn), so, like his Master before him, he is a mourner under that discipline of trial, both external and internal, which

[1] Ezek. ix. 4.

is the heavenly Father's chastisement, sent "for our profit" to make us "partakers of his holiness."[1] Though here again the analogy between the Master and the disciple does not altogether hold, and must not be pressed too far. For in us the heavenly Father's discipline not only brings about the moral perfection of our nature, and draws up the lower will into complete accordance with the higher (this it did even with Him, as we see in comparing his first strong cry in the garden, "O my Father, let this cup pass from me," with the second, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done"[2]); but in us this discipline also purges out the evil which it finds in our fallen nature, "with the spirit of judgment and with the spirit of burning;"[3] it not only perfects, but it purifies. In Christ God's discipline was, as we saw, only that of the sculptor, who chisels a block of stainless, veinless marble into a beautiful vase. In us the discipline is rather that of a refiner and purifier of silver. The metal has not to be wrought only, but to be separated from the dross which cleaves to it.

"For they shall be comforted." Was the Divine Mourner Himself comforted? Doubtless, with high and surpassing consolations flowing down abundantly into his spirit, although He condescended not to accept those ordinary alleviations of man's lot, which come by God's merciful permission to all of us in the ordinary course of human life. We do well in thinking of Christ under the prophetical delineation of Him as "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with

[1] *See* Heb. xii. 10. [2] St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. [3] *See* Isaiah iv. 4.

grief;"[1] for this view of Him is calculated to touch the heart with sorrow for his expiatory sufferings; but we must not allow this aspect of his lot to obscure the great truth that He was a man of joy also, a man upheld by "the joy that was set before him" in the endurance of the cross, in the despising of the shame and pain.[2] We are expressly told that He "rejoiced in spirit" when the seventy returned to Him with the tidings that even the devils were subject to them through his name;[3] and must we not accept that notice of his state of mind on a particular occasion as one which will cover all occasions of the same kind, all the indications made to Him in the order of God's Providence that the great cause of human salvation, which had been entrusted to Him, was winning a great and glorious success? Were there not lost souls enough, reached and recovered through his ministry, to waken up the note of joy, not only from the harps of angels,[4] but also from the heart of the Redeemer? To whom does the lost sheep give so much joy as to the shepherd, who goes out after it, and seeks it, and finds it, and "lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing"?[5] Ah, yes! rejoicing! neither men nor angels can rejoice over it as He does.

And again, look at the twenty-second Psalm, which gives us his experience upon the cross, when the climax of his humiliation was reached. Does not the end of that doleful Psalm brighten with joy? Is it not all radiant with praise? "Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him. . . . My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation. . . .

[1] Isaiah liii. 3. [2] *See* Heb. xii. 2. [3] *See* St. Luke x. 17, 21.
[4] *See* St. Luke xv. 10. [5] *See* St. Luke xv. 5, 6.

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee"[1] (the fruit of the cross was present to the Sufferer's mind upon the cross, and elicited from Him the note of praise). And was there not, too, if the portraits of the Evangelists have represented Him to us faithfully, a majestic peace presiding at all times in his human spirit, a peace perfectly unruffled even under the sorest pressure of adversity, whether by care, or prejudice, or pain, or passion, so that his spirit reflected at all times the perfect image of heavenly things, as in a clear unruffled lake the azure of the firmament, or the stars which glitter on the brow of night, are reflected. Well;—this joy and peace which is in the spirit of the Master, being purchased for disciples by his work of righteousness and expiation, descends into their spirits also, and becomes their comfort, as it was his, in their mourning for sin, in their mourning under God's chastisement and correction. And if it be asked where joy and peace, those holy tempers which St. Paul enumerates among the first fruits of the Spirit,[2] are to be found in the Beatitudes, the answer is that they are to be found in the blessings annexed to the various features of the spiritual mind. Joy and peace are wrapped up in each of these blessings, not only in the consolation of the mourners, but in the inheritance of the earth by the meek, in the satisfaction of those who hunger after righteousness, in the mercy obtained by the merciful, in the vision of God enjoyed by the pure in heart, in the recognised Divine sonship of the peacemakers.

[1] Verses 23, 25, 27. [2] *See* Gal. v. 22, 23.

And it may be added that as, in one point of view, each virtue is a blessing, being wrought in the soul by God's grace, so conversely each blessing is a virtue or excellence of character,—joy and peace are holy tempers, in the entire absence of which the soul is not what it ought to be in God's sight.

In conclusion, let the reader try his heart earnestly by what has been said. Mourning for sin, mourning under God's loving discipline, this is one of the "spots" of God's children.[1] Have I in some measure this "spot" upon me? A merely blameless life, combined with a smooth path, an easy prosperous course, this is not "mourning"; there is no receptivity here for the "consolations" of grace. But let it be clearly understood that this test is proposed for the judgment of ourselves only, not of others. Ah! how many lives there are, which seem to observers from without bright and happy and joyous, into the inner and secret resorts of which if we could look, we should see them to be burdened lives, the lives of mourners. One would be disposed to think that there are comparatively few who, when once the period of early youth is passed, have not some burden to bear, however little those around them may know of the care or the disquietude (or whatever it may be) which constitutes the burden.

Well, the Divine Son of Mary was a burden-bearer. All his true people are burden-bearers. His second Beatitude is upon burden-bearers. Let the burden, whatever it is, be brought to Him, laid down at his feet, commended to Him in prayer,—

[1] *See* Deut. xxxii. 5.

and the truth of those words shall be realised, "My yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light." Nay, the burden shall become a winged burden, like that in the prophet's vision, which was "lifted up" as with the wings of a stork "between the earth and the heaven";[1] it shall lend wings to the soul to further its communion with God, as it is said, "Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

[1] *See* Zech. v. 9.

CHAPTER IV

MEEKNESS

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.—
St. Matt. v. 5.

Let us begin by tracing the connexion of this Beatitude with that which precedes it—"Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The mourner for sin, having experienced the internal consolation of grace, is disposed by that experience to show meekness and gentleness to those who thwart, insult, or injure him. Entirely similar is the connexion, by which, in St. Paul's enumeration of the fruits of the Spirit, "longsuffering" (which is only another form of meekness) is linked on immediately to peace;—"Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness."[1] It is only our tasting peace in the conscience through the Saviour's blood and righteousness which can make us longsuffering and gentle—"patient," as the Apostle elsewhere phrases it, "towards all men."[2]

"Blessed *are* the meek." These Beatitudes exhibit to us the mind of Christ as it must be transferred into, and find expression in, the mind of his

[1] Gal. v. 22. [2] *See* 1 Thess. v. 14.

disciples. Now, that meekness was one most characteristic feature of his mind may be inferred from those great words of his which have been fully considered in Chapter ii. of Part I.: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."[1] In proposing Himself as a model for his disciples to copy, Christ summarises his whole character in meekness and lowliness of heart, the latter virtue corresponding to the first Beatitude, the former to that which is before us. And in St. Paul's catalogue of the fruits of the Spirit we find the very same predominance of meekness and lowliness of heart. He enumerates nine such fruits in all. And of these nine three may be said to represent meekness in different forms. He makes mention of "meekness" itself, but in addition to this he recites the kindred and closely associated graces of "longsuffering" and "gentleness."[2] The Christian's mind then wears the complexion of meekness; one third of his graces are graces which may be represented by this single word. And so it was, as we have just seen from his own testimony, with the Divine Master Himself. In St. Peter's ladder of the Christian graces the *predominance* of meekness is not marked with the same emphasis. But here again we observe that "patience," which is a closely allied grace, and may be said to be only another form of meekness, is one of the eight steps of the ladder—one might call it the central step, as being the fifth of the eight,—"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance, patience."[3]

[1] St. Matt. xi. 29. [2] *See* Gal. v. 22, 23. [3] 2 Pet. i. 5, 6.

I. According to the plan which has been followed in considering the two previous Beatitudes, we will look at meekness first as it existed in the Master's mind, before we trace its passage into the minds of his disciples, and the modification which it must there of necessity undergo. The Lord's extraordinary meekness under circumstances of the most cruel wrong and grievous hardship was *foretold* by prophets: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth"[1] (a prediction which, when the fulfilment of it was explained to him, so touched the heart of the Ethopian nobleman that it became the instrument of his conversion[2]). It was *described afterwards* by Apostles who had witnessed the exhibition of it, and proposed as a model to those Christian slaves whose froward heathen masters used to buffet them wrongfully, and sometimes for doing well: "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously."[3] It is *recounted* by Evangelists as a salient feature of the Passion. It was shown towards Malchus, the high priest's servant, when, as they were binding the Saviour, He asked for the use of his hands for another moment ("Suffer ye thus far"), that He might touch his ear and heal the wound which Simon's sword had inflicted.[4] It was shown towards Judas the traitor, when his Master spoke to him, as he was consummating his treachery,

[1] Isaiah liii. 7.
[2] *See* Acts viii. 32, 35, 37, 38.
[3] 1 Pet. ii. 23.
[4] *See* St. Luke xxii. 51.

in accents not of indignant repudiation of his hypocritical friendship, but of loving remonstrance: "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"[1] It was shown again even more strikingly when, as He stood before the high priest, "one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?" and received only the gentle and reasonable reply, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?"[2] "Learn of me," He had said to his disciples, "for I am meek and lowly of heart." But how slow to learn of Him in this respect have even his most saintly followers shown themselves, their human nature, unlike his, being infected with pride and selfishness! St. Paul also stood before the high priest, and received, most unjustly and indecorously, by order of his judge, a similar indignity. And what language do we hear from the Apostle's lips under these circumstances but that of hot resentment, almost execration—language which had to be apologized for afterwards, as having been uttered under a mistake, though indeed the mistake could hardly excuse it: "God shall smite thee, *thou* whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"[3] It must be admitted that St. Paul, when he allowed himself to use such language to any one in the position of a lawful magistrate, could not have been holding the model of the Saviour before his eyes, could not have been learning of Him who is meek and lowly of heart.

[1] St. Luke xxii. 48. [2] St. John xviii. 22, 23.
[3] *See* Acts xxiii. 2, 3, 4, 5.

Having been taken by surprise, he had forfeited for a moment, but doubtless only for a moment, that perfect "peace" with God through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the strength of which alone "longsuffering" can be shown to those who injure and insult us.

II. And thus we come next to speak of the passage of the grace of meekness from the mind of the Divine Master into that of the disciple. It must be evident that here again, as in the two preceding Beatitudes, the circumstance that it is a sinner's mind, into which the grace is transfused, must to a certain extent alter its complexion. There must evidently be a much stronger claim for meekness upon a sinner than there can possibly be upon a perfectly righteous and innocent person. And so far as a man by grace recognises himself to be a sinner, so far will that stronger claim be recognised and felt by him. The person who offers the injury or insult to me may be committing an act of grievous sin in offering it;—be it so;—but have I not deserved as a sinner (and oh, how often a wilful and deliberate sinner!) to be treated with obloquy, contumely, scorn, outrage? What are the just wages of sin? what the treatment which it has merited? That which was inflicted upon the holy Lamb of God, who substituted Himself for us in his Cross and Passion, and "bare our sins in his own body on the tree."[1] Therefore whatever taunts may be heaped upon me, or whatever injuries done me, if I wish to take up my true and just position under them, I must say with the penitent thief, "I indeed justly; for I receive the due reward of my deeds."[2] I must comply with the

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

[2] *See* Luke xxiii. 41.

exhortation of St. James; "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord" (it must be real humiliation, if it is to be humiliation *in the sight of the Lord*, who "trieth the hearts and reins"[1]), "and he shall lift you up";[2] and again with the exhortation of St. Peter; "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."[3] For though it is true that an insult or injury, so far as it is sinful, proceeds from man's perverse will, yet since man can neither say or do anything against us but by God's permission, and since what he does say and do against us is all taken up into the scheme of Divine Providence, and proceeds under the Divine superintendence, it is still "the mighty hand of God" which brings the injury or insult upon us, possibly for our punishment. "Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house,"[4] He said to David, to show him that it was God's mighty hand under which he was to smart, and that he must look above the lustfulness of Amnon,[5] and the horrible undutifulness and impiety of Absalom,[6] to Him who was framing out of the lustfulness, the undutifulness, the impiety, a scourge for the chastisement of David's own acts of adultery and murder. The punishment was no less God's infliction because it was brought about by the profligacy and wickedness of men;—"I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." Let us learn then to acknowledge the wrongful dealing of men (for this will greatly help us to bear it meekly), as coming to us,

[1] *See* Psalm vii. 9. [2] James iv. 10. [3] 1 Pet. v. 6.
[4] 2 Sam. xii. 11. [5] *See* 2 Sam. xiii. 1 *to* 19.
[6] *See* 2 Sam. xv. 1 *to* 18; xvi. 22, 23.

like all other troubles, by the dispensation of a Father's hand, and to humble ourselves under it, as being what we have deserved, if not at the hand of the particular transgressor, yet at all events at God's hand. Let us make our cross a cross of the penitent thief by acknowledging it to be no more than our due;—"I indeed justly."[1] And assuredly in due time the Lord will exalt us. He will not fail of his promise "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."[2] What a revival of the spirit of the penitent thief must have been the great promise made to him in his dying moments—the promise of Paradise to be enjoyed before sundown under the wing and by the side of the Saviour.[3] He could endure after that to see the soldiers advance with their crowbars, to put an end to his tortures by breaking his legs.

III. But in what does the special blessedness of the meek consist? In their promised inheritance of earth. "Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Our Lord is doing in this Beatitude what He was ever doing, what He did in his latest moments, and with his dying breath,—quoting from the Psalms. The thirty-seventh Psalm, from which here he quotes, may be called the Psalm of inheriting (or possessing) the earth, for no seldomer than six times does that phrase, or its equivalent, occur in it. They that "trust in the Lord and do good," they that "wait upon the Lord," "such as be blessed of him," "the righteous," they that "wait on the Lord and keep his way"[4]—to all these, no less than "to the

[1] *See* St. Luke xxiii. 41.
[2] *See* Isaiah lvii. 15.
[3] *See* St. Luke xxiii. 43.
[4] *See* verses 3, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34.

meek," is the inheritance of the earth covenanted. Viewed merely in the light of the Old Testament, the earth, of which the inheritance is promised, is the land flowing with milk and honey—the land of Canaan. But Christ's Gospel does with the promises of the Old Testament what Christ Himself did with the water in the waterpots at the marriage in Cana,—transmutes them into a nobler and richer form, a form in which they not only refresh but exhilarate.[1] So that we must see something better and higher than Canaan underlying the earth of which He here speaks. The promise, evangelically understood, refers, I apprehend, both to the *present* and to the *future* state of the true disciple.

(1) As to his present state, the Christian who exhibits his Master's characteristic grace of meekness is open to enjoyment, because through his meekness, his acquiescence in God's trying dispensations and in man's provocations and injuries, he is at peace. Anger and strife stir up disquiet in the heart, and, while they last, make enjoyment impossible. But meekness stills anger and strife, as Christ stilled the tempest ;[2] and then the mind is able to appreciate the earthly blessings which God allows to us, and the simple pleasures with which He strews our path, the sights and sounds of Nature, for example, wherever we turn our eyes, the colour of the flowers, the song of the birds. The meek may thus *possess* the earth without *owning* a single rood of it. He has the "promise of the life that now is," as well as "of that which is to come."[3] In a most real sense

[1] *See* St. John ii. 1 *to* 12.
[2] *See* St. Matt. viii. 26; St. Mark iv. 39; St. Luke viii. 24.
[3] *See* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

"all things are his."[1] Whereas the man of broad acres, the legal owner of houses and lands, may, through furious outbursts of temper, which he has not the grace to control, be incapable of receiving any *pleasure* from his large possessions. "Be not as a lion in thy house," says the son of Sirach to such an one, "nor frantick among thy servants."[2] Who can be other than a miserable man that is always tearing, and raving, and storming? Not he, but "the meek," shall inherit the earth.

(2) But doubtless the *complete* fulfilment of the promise is reserved for the *future* of the true disciple, when the Lord shall "create new heavens and a new earth," "wherein dwelleth righteousness."[3] The redeemed in the Revelation sing praise to the Lamb, not only because He has redeemed them by his blood, but because of the future royal and sacerdotal dignity, with which they shall be invested on a renovated earth—

> "Earth all refined with bright supernal fires,
> Tinctured with holy blood, and winged with pure desires."[4]

"Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."[5] "Reign on the earth," possibly in a more literal sense than we are apt to imagine. For what is the recompense, as foretold in the Parable of the Pounds, of those servants who had made the pound entrusted to them yield respectively ten and five pounds? Earthly dominion apparently, only on an earth which has passed through a baptism of fire, as at the time of

[1] *See* 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.
[2] Ecclus. iv. 30.
[3] *See* 2 Pet. iii. 13, and Isaiah lxv. 17; lxvi. 22.
[4] Keble's *Christian Year* [Easter Even].
[5] Rev. v. 10.

the deluge it passed through a baptism of water.[1] "Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. . . . Be thou also over five cities."[2] This view of the significance of part of the parable not only gives definiteness in our minds to the future recompense of the righteous, but serves to explain the ultimate inheritance of the earth by the meek, their eventual kingdom *over the earth*, in whose hearts *the kingdom of heaven*, "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,"[3] has already found place and established itself.

If then we would, by the help of God's grace, derive into our minds the mind of Christ (and there is no other way of attaining solid Christian virtue), we must copy especially his meekness, and learn of Him in that particular. In serene days, when there is a lull of temptation, when no one thwarts our plans, or wounds our pride, or crosses our will, and perhaps, so far from opposing, other people defer to us, it is easy to imagine that we are meek, and secretly to congratulate ourselves on our possession of this grace. But oh! it needs not insult or injury, which probably are very seldom (or seldom intentionally) offered to us, to bring out the hidden corruptions of our heart; a sharp word, a slight affront, the least mortification of our vanity, is sufficient to stir up turbid and angry feeling, whether our ill-humour vents itself in peevish and angry words, or, which is equally bad, takes the form of morose sullenness. Let us seek for the grace of self-control by prayer,

[1] *See* 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6, 7. [2] St. Luke xix. 16, 17, 18, 19.
[3] *See* Rom. xiv. 17.

as one great instrument of gaining it. But prayer is not the only instrument indicated to us as essential to success, and unless we use another instrument we shall gain no ground. Our Lord did not say merely "Pray," but "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."[1] Since God does not help us but through the exertion of our own moral faculties and powers, watchfulness must go along with prayer if the grace is to be attained. Watchfulness, with all that watchfulness implies, forecast of the temptations which the day may bring forth, previous resolutions offered and consecrated to God in prayer, the constant calling to mind that our state is one of warfare, and that we are surrounded by watchful, powerful, and malignant enemies, the forearming ourselves with such reflexions as that which has been already offered, that, whatever we may be called upon to go through at the hands of others, we have more than deserved it, and that even here God is the doer of it, using man's perverse will to chastise us. Such watchfulness, united with fervent prayer, will not fail to draw down the promised blessing. We shall not "enter into temptation." Not but that we shall feel the force of it; otherwise it would be no temptation. But we shall absolutely refuse our consent to it; we shall not even dip into it the foot of the will.

[2] St. Matt. xxvi. 41.

CHAPTER V

HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—ST. MATT. v. 6.

BY what sequence of thought does this Beatitude grow out of that which went before it? The preceding benediction was pronounced upon "the meek," —upon those who *acquiesce* humbly and cheerfully in the Divine will, whether it ordain for us trouble of a purely Providential character, or insult and injury at the hand of man. But in the character of the true disciple (as was the case also even more remarkably in that of the Divine Master) there is something more than acquiescence—there is also lofty *aspiration*, high spiritual ambition. The meek acceptance of all God's orderings is perfectly compatible with—nay, leads up to, a burning desire to do and suffer all God's will. This is one link of thought with the immediately preceding Beatitude.—Another is to be found in the inheritance of the earth which is assured by promise to the meek. Yes! the earth in a certain true sense is their *possession*. Yet think not that the earth is their *portion*, or that they acquiesce in the pleasures which it has to offer. They look and long for that entire conformity to the

mind of God, to which, while we may approximate we can never attain, so long as we are in the flesh. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."[1]

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The desires of the heart are a test of high virtue,—a much more stringent test than any action. The will may accept and adopt what is right, and may adopt it because it is right, and yet may feel such a repugnancy to the action that it can only do it by putting constraint upon itself;—the desires run all the while in another direction. This is by no means perfect virtue, as Aristotle most truly teaches.[2] No man has thoroughly acquired a virtue, the desires of whose heart are not brought round to it,—who does not practise it out of love for it. We are not in a thoroughly healthy moral state until we find in ourselves an appetite and a strong one for righteousness. "How is your heart disposed," asks good St. Francis of Sales, "in respect of God's commandments? Do you find them good, pleasant, and delightful? Ah! my dear child, he that hath his taste right, and his digestion good, loves wholesome meats, and rejects others."[3] "Blessed are they,"—not only who do righteousness, but "who hunger and thirst after righteousness,"—embrace it with their desires,—long after it.

[1] 2 Peter iii. 13.

[2] *Eth. Nic.*, Lib. II. Cap. II. Virtue he regards as being a habit; and the sign of the habit's being acquired is the pleasure given by the actions done from it. A man who merely holds his bodily appetites in check, but does so with a painful constraint upon himself, is not yet temperate, but only continent (ἐγκρατὴς). He is not temperate (σώφρων) until he finds pleasure in acts of temperance.

[3] *Devout Life* of S. François de Sales, Part V. Chap. IV. 2.

I. Hunger and thirst after righteousness, as a feature of the Divine Master's mind,—this is the first point which we have to consider in pursuance of our plan. It goes without saying that, in his case, the righteousness which He longed for was not, could not have been, that entire deliverance from the power and bondage of sin, which is one of the great objects of desire and aspiration to his followers. In Him was no sin ;[1] He was as free from sin in tendency as He was in act. What then was the "righteousness," after which He hungered and thirsted? It may be all summed up in two points, a desire both *to do* and *to suffer* all that it was his Father's will that He should do and suffer. When He came into the world, and arrayed Himself in the body which had been prepared for Him, as a medium for the great sacrificial offering which it was arranged in the counsels of eternity that He should make, He said, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God."[2] And, again, looking back upon the moment of the Incarnation and Nativity, He said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."[3] And what was this will?—that He should seek and save lost souls. For so He says in the succeeding verse ; "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." And this will He did with a longing desire to finish it so strong that it temporarily suspended the bodily hunger for natural food. "My meat," said He, when the disciples invited Him, as

[1] *See* 1 John iii. 5.
[2] *See* Heb. x. 5 *to* 10, with Psalm xl. 7, 8.
[3] St. John vi. 38.

weary and hungry with his journey, to partake of the food which they had recently purchased in the city,—"my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."[1] He had already commenced to do the Father's will in that district, by deeply interesting the Samaritan woman in his discourse, and eliciting from her a petition for the living water, of which He had told her that He Himself was the giver;[2] and He was now about to "finish the work," by gaining disciples from among her fellow-townsmen, who were drawn to Him by the woman's testimony, and were now trooping across the fields in the direction of the well,—a goodly harvest of souls, of which the woman may be said to have been the first-fruits.[3]—But He hungered and thirsted, not only after *the doing of God's will* in the salvation of man, but also, and still more remarkably, after that *suffering of God's will* which alone made the salvation practicable. "I have a baptism to be baptized with," said He; "and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"[4] The baptism was the baptism of suffering, as is seen by his asking St. James and St. John, on another occasion, whether they could endure to be "baptized with the baptism which He was baptized with."[5] And his great eagerness to meet it, when the hour came for Him to throw Himself upon the altar of the Cross, is evidenced by the alacrity with which, in his final journey to Jerusalem, He put himself at the head of his disciples, and led the way,—an alacrity which, coupled with the minuteness of his prediction as to the sufferings He

[1] St. John iv. 34. [2] Verses 10, 14, 15. [3] Verses 30, 35.
[4] St. Luke xii. 50. [5] *See* St. Matt. xx. 22.

was going to encounter, seems to have struck into their spirits a deep supernatural awe. "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, *Saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again."[1] The Captain of our salvation was to be made "perfect through sufferings"[2] (not perfect in the sense of sinless, for that He was from the first moment of his conception in the womb, but perfect by the bringing round of the lower will which was in Him, and which naturally shrank from suffering, into loving conformity with that will of the Father which prescribed for Him suffering as the indispensable condition of human salvation); and for this perfection through sufferings He yearned, and indicated his yearning in those words just cited; "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

II. We now pass on to the consideration of this hunger and thirst after righteousness, as it is transmitted from the mind of the Master into the mind of the disciple, and undergoes certain modifications in the transmission.

The *ground* of this hunger and thirst, it is evident,

[1] St. Mark x. 32, 33, 34. [2] *See* Heb. ii. 10.

is the new life imparted to the soul by God in regeneration; "Except a man be born again,—born of water and the Spirit,—he cannot see—cannot enter into the kingdom of God";[1] "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."[2] Spiritual life follows the analogy of natural. Natural life must be sustained by nourishment. And the craving after this nourishment in the animal world is the uniform accompaniment and evidence of natural life. Spiritual life too demands continual nourishment, and involves spiritual hunger and thirst, a perpetual craving after spiritual food, in order to spiritual growth. And in this great saying of the Divine Master, upon which we are now engaged, the spiritual food is called "righteousness." "Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The word is a very comprehensive one. Let us rapidly unfold its chief points of significance.

First, *the righteousness of justification*, that is, the righteousness of Christ freely imputed to every one who sincerely believes in Him. Here is the hunger and thirst after *this* righteousness, expressing itself in one of Christ's most eminent followers; "Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."[3] It must be very evident that this craving after an imputed

[1] St. John iii. 3, 5. [2] 1 Peter i. 23. [3] Phil. iii. 8, 9.

righteousness can only characterize a sinner; it is only because man is a sinner, and, as such, has no perfect righteousness of his own, in which he can stand before God and find acceptance,—that he needs such an imputation. Here then the Divine Master can have no part in the disciple's hunger and thirst; the hunger and thirst has taken another form in passing out of the Master's mind into the mind of the disciple.

Observe, however, that St. Paul does not stop where we broke off just now in quoting from him. He was animated by another object of strong desire, besides that of being found in Christ, clothed with the righteousness which is of God by faith; for he continues thus: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."[1] Here he gives utterance to his strong desire for the righteousness of sanctification, describing it, according to its highest ideal, as the leading of a risen life in the flesh, and as perfect conformity with Christ in his sufferings and death, in order to conformity with Him in glory. But as we are now expounding the words of the Divine Master, not of the Apostle, we will adhere to the phrase "righteousness"—righteousness of sanctification. The true disciple hungers and thirsts after the means conducive to sanctification, and after the end to which the means conduce. First; after the means. He has a strong appetite for the Word of God, as the means of spiritual growth,—a feature

[1] Phil. iii. 10, 11.

this of spiritual character, which St. Peter desires to see in his converts: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word."[1] Observe the word "sincere," which, as applied to milk must mean unadulterated. Without in the least denying the profitableness of such expositions of God's Word, whether spoken or written, as come from men of piety and learning, how often does it happen that the commentary weakens the text, just as water weakens milk,—nay, sometimes obscures it by weaving over it a web of controversy, or corrupts it by an admixture of human notions and reasonings.—Next; he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness experiences a strong craving for the public ordinances of religion, a craving to which Psalmists, though living under a light so much dimmer than that which Christians enjoy, give utterance continually: "How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."[2] And again: "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary."[3] And again: "We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple."[4] And those who believe, as it may be presumed that all Church people do, that "the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper,"[5] and who in con-

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 2.
[2] Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2.
[3] Psalm lxiii. 1, 2.
[4] Psalm lxv. 4.
[5] Church Catechism. *Answer to the Question*, "What is the inward part, or thing signified?" [in the Lord's Supper].

nexion with this belief call to mind his own declaration, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him,"[1] cannot but feel, and they are warranted by the experience of all Christians in feeling, that the spiritual food offered in this Holy Sacrament is that after which the renewed soul will crave most strongly, in proportion as it is renewed. For the spiritual union enjoyed with Christ in this highest means of grace, though indeed faith is the mediating instrument of it, is here enjoyed under the special sanction of a Divine ordinance, and with the warrant of the Saviour's special command, given on the eve of his Passion.

But God's ordinances, even the highest of them, are only a means to an end, that end being the complete sanctification of man in spirit, soul, and body.[2] And for this sanctification the true Christian hungers and thirsts as the great end of his being, for which all that God has done for him in Creation and Redemption, in Nature and in Grace, are only preparatory steps leading up to the consummation. He longs with ardent desire *to be*, *to do*, *to suffer* whatsoever God would have him be, and do, and suffer. *To be* in mind, in disposition, in temper, in the hidden man of the heart, all that God would desire to see him; for mere faultlessness of the external conduct cannot satisfy any one who is alive to the spirituality of God and of his law. *To do* whatever God, by the guidance of his Providence, and the prompting of his Spirit, indicates as his will; and

[1] St. John vi. 55, 56. [2] *See* 1 Thess. v. 23.

never to miss, through want of watchfulness or discernment, those opportunities, whether of doing or receiving good, which he throws from time to time across the path of every one of us,—the good works these "which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them."[1] Finally; to *suffer* cheerfully and lovingly whatever God appoints in the order of his Providence as the necessary discipline for the complete subjugation of the will. And if sin have so insinuated itself into his will and affections (a great difference this between his case and that of the Divine Master), that it cannot otherwise be eradicated than by Divine cautery and surgery,—the discipline of sharp and sore trial, stripping him bare, it may be, of all solace from the creature,—however much the flesh may shrink from such trial, he will pray not to be exempted from it, should God see it to be necessary to his complete separation from sin; and such prayer will form a part of the hungering and thirsting after righteousness which characterizes him as a disciple of the Divine Master.

The promise annexed to this Beatitude is, that they who hunger and thirst after righteousness "shall be filled,"—filled with the nourishment for which they crave. Filled, we may say, looking at many passages of Holy Scripture, in conformity with one of God's characteristic attributes. In the recital of these attributes the Psalmist says, "Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry."[2] And again; "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."[3]

[1] *See* Eph. ii. 10. [2] Psalm cxlvi. 7. [3] Psalm cvii. 9.

And so the Blessed Virgin Mary in her song (with the sense of which it would be well if our minds were as familiar, as our ears are with the sound): "He hath filled the hungry with good things."[1] And among the miracles of our Lord, who is "the image of the invisible God,"[2] that of feeding the five thousand in the wilderness has this preëminence, that it is the only one recorded for us by all four Evangelists.[3] Nay; to provide satisfaction even for the craving of the lower animals, whose cry of pain is in his ear a prayer, is a function to which God condescends, and which is enumerated among his attributes; "Who giveth fodder unto the cattle: and *feedeth the young ravens that call upon him.*"[4] And God Himself with his own mouth, answering Job out of the whirlwind, claims this attribute as his own; "Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat."[5] And our Lord fastens upon God's care for the famishing birds, and draws from it an *à fortiori* argument as to his provision of meat and drink for his human creatures: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"[6] And there is another *à fortiori* argument of our Lord's—one of his simplest, deepest, loveliest sayings—which exactly chimes in with this Beatitude: "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to

[1] St. Luke i. 53.
[2] Col. i. 15.
[3] *See* St. Matt. xiv. 15 *to* 22; St. Mark vi. 36 *to* 45; St. Luke ix. 12 *to* 18; St. John vi. 5 *to* 15.
[4] Psalm cxlvii. 9. P.B.V.
[5] Job xxxviii. 41.
[6] St. Matt. vi. 26.

give good gifts unto your children ;"—if, fallen as you are from righteousness, the parental instinct is still so strong in you that even a hard and ruffianly man would not refuse his last morsel to a famishing child of his who cried for it—" how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Ask Him with strong craving, and the cry to which craving gives rise,—with " hunger and thirst after righteousness," and that prayer from the depth of the heart, which is the expression of the hunger and thirst. What is it to " hunger and thirst after righteousness " but to hunger and thirst after the Holy Spirit, by whom alone that complete conformity to God's will and Christ's image, which *is* righteousness, can be formed in the soul ? If, looking around us in Nature, we observe that God nowhere implants a craving but He provides some satisfaction for it, how absolutely certain is it that, where he has communicated to the soul, naturally " dead in trespasses in sins,"[2] this hunger and thirst after righteousness, the earliest craving of the new life, He will respond to the cry which that craving makes, and give the Holy Spirit in response to it !

We may now observe, in concluding this Chapter, that what has just been said enables us to understand the absence of this grace of hungering and thirsting after righteousness from St. Paul's catalogue of those heavenly tempers, which he calls " the fruit of the Spirit " (Gal. v. 22, 23). The Apostle writes from a different and more advanced point of the Dispensation than that at which his Divine Master

[1] St. Luke xi. 11, 13. [2] Ephes. ii. 1.

stood when He uttered the Beatitudes,—a point when God, by sending down the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, to take up his abode in the Church, had provided for the satisfaction of that hunger and thirst after righteousness, which is the subject of the fourth Beatitude. Love, joy, peace, and the other graces enumerated by St. Paul constitute the "righteousness," for which men did but long and yearn before the Holy Spirit was given, but of which they became possessed, at least in embryo, when they became possessed of Him. The human spirit, inhabited by the Holy Spirit, finds substantially a satisfaction for its cravings after righteousness ; and yet, until we " awake up after God's likeness,"[1] having laid aside for ever the body of sin and death, the satisfaction, though of the highest order, must necessarily be imperfect in degree. Fruit is indeed the ultimate produce of the tree, the highest outcome of its life ; but fruit may be unripe, and need the sun to ripen it. " The fruit of the Spirit," as distinct from the leaves of profession, and the blossom of spiritual gifts, is doubtless put forth by the true Christian here below ; yet is he still an aspirant after a larger measure of that Spirit, which he is already gifted with, and thus hungers and thirsts still after righteousness, though possessed of its seminal principle. And as regards St. Peter's ladder of Christian virtues (2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7), the aspiration after righteousness is there implied by the very form into which the precept is thrown. " Giving all diligence," says the Apostle, " add to your faith virtue ; and to virtue knowledge ; And to knowledge temper-

[1] *See* Psalm xvii. 16. P.B.V.

ance ; and to temperance patience ; and to patience godliness ; And to godliness brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness charity." " Precious " as their faith was (v. 1), they were to " give all diligence " that it should not stand alone, that the light which it kindled in their hearts should be continually supplied with oil from the other Christian virtues, and so kept burning brightly. This diligence must necessarily imply an effort after these virtues, a seeking, asking, knocking at heaven's gate for them,— a seeking, asking, and knocking prompted by strong desire, by that "hunger and thirst after righteousness," which the Lord commends to us in the fourth Beatitude, and to which He promises satisfaction through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER VI

MERCIFULNESS

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.—
St. Matt. v. 7.

The connexion of this Beatitude, and of those that follow it, with that which immediately went before, shows how carefully and methodically the Beatitudes are arranged, as is the case with the petitions of the Lord's Prayer. The promise to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" was that they should be "filled"—filled, that is, with the righteousness after which they crave. Now this righteousness, though its seat is in the disciple's heart, will exhibit itself in his life. Towards the misery which it finds in the world, it will dispose its possessor to show mercy: "Blessed *are* the merciful." From the sin, which in such abundance it finds there, it will dispose him to keep himself unspotted: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart." Towards the dissensions which it finds, it will dispose him to act as a reconciler and healer of differences: "Blessed *are* the peacemakers." Yet, much as the righteous man may labour for peace, he must expect that the world will "make itself ready to battle."[1] For opposition he

[1] *See* Psalm cxx. 6. P.B.V.

must prepare himself, and towards this opposition the attitude which he will take up is that of patient endurance ; "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Is it not clear that these Divine utterances are not isolated sayings, but as closely knit together by the argument of the discourse, as are the members of the body by joints and sinews?

It may be asked on a superficial survey of the Beatitudes, "Where do we find in them a benediction upon love or charity?" Love is the distinctively Christian grace, which St. Paul, in his catalogue of the fruits of the Spirit, mentions first of all, as really embracing every other Christian grace: "But the fruit of the Spirit is *love*, joy, peace, longsuffering,"[1] etc. And love is the grace which St. Peter, in his ladder of the Christian virtues, mentions last, inasmuch as it is the highest of all virtues, the virtue in which all others culminate; "Add to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."[2] The answer to the question just now asked is that love finds its place in that Beatitude which is now before us, "Blessed *are* the merciful." Mercy is only another form of love, it is the attitude which love takes up towards the sin and sorrow which it finds in the world. The Divine love, not content with circulating within the precinct of the Godhead between the Sacred Persons of the Holy Trinity, nor yet with pouring itself out in benevolence and complacency upon the angels, who retained their integrity, assumes, when it comes into the

[1] *See* Gal. v. 22. [2] *See* 2 Pet. i. 6, 7.

human world, the form of profound compassion for the wreck of human hearts and hopes which it finds there, and hastens to the relief of the sufferers. In view of our Lord's other words and teachings, and still more of his whole work, it is clear that this is the beatitude which He has most strongly emphasized, and to which therefore a prominence must be given above the others in any estimate of their relative importance. He has emphasized it by *simple precept:* "Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven."[1] Emphasized it by *devoting at least three Parables to its special inculcation*, the Good Samaritan,[2] the Unforgiving Servant,[3] the Sheep and the Goats,[4]—the sheep and the goats being distinguished from one another by the simple criterion of the sheep having done works of mercy, and the goats having left them undone. Emphasized it by *weaving it into the Lord's Prayer* (where the fifth petition is a plea that the petitioner has done what in him lies to come under the Beatitude, "Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us"[5]), and, in St. Matthew's version of the prayer, by drawing attention to that petition afterwards; "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."[6] Emphasized it specially, and with an emphasis which surely must leave an indelible impress on the hearts of his

[1] St. Luke vi. 36, 37.
[2] St. Luke x. 30 *to* 38.
[3] St. Matt. xviii. 23, *to the end.*
[4] St. Matt. xxv. 31, *to the end.*
[5] St. Luke xi. 4; St. Matt. vi. 12.
[6] St. Matt. vi. 14, 15.

followers, by *his life's work*. For what was the Saviour's life's work,—the work which He came down from heaven specially to do? Acts of mercy corporal and spiritual[1] were his life's work,—the healing of the bodies of men, the saving of their souls. As to corporal works of mercy, we see him visiting the sick, when asked to come to heal Jairus's daughter,[2] feeding the hungry on two occasions in the wilderness,[3] and manifesting the miraculous power which was in Him (almost exclusively) by healing "all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people."[4] As to spiritual works of mercy, we see Him counselling

[1] Of the seven corporal works of mercy (enumerated in the Latin mnemonic line, "Visito, Poto, Cibo, Redimo, Tego, Colligo, Condo") our Lord mentions six in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (St. Matt. xxv. 31 *to end*): 1, visiting the sick (*v.* 36); 2, giving drink to the thirsty (*v.* 35); 3, giving meat to the hungry (*ibid.*); 4, ransoming the captive (not that our Lord speaks of "ransoming," but only of "coming unto" the prisoner; but the deliverance of prisoners of war being effected by ransom, the work of mercy to prisoners took that name) (*v.* 36); 5, clothing the naked (*ibid.*); 6, taking in the stranger—συνηγάγετέ με—(*v.* 35). Burying the dead has been added by mediæval writers to bring up the works of mercy to the number seven, which everywhere in Holy Scripture is a sacred number denoting perfection. Burying the dead must take its example, as an action of piety, and reverent regard to the body designed to be a temple of the Holy Ghost, from St. Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus (St. John xix. 38 *to the end*), and from the "devout men" who "carried Stephen *to his burial* and made great lamentation over him" (Acts viii. 2). In the Apocryphal Books of Tobit and Esdras, great value is attached to the burial of the dead. The angel Raphael says to Tobit (xii. 12, 13); "When thou didst pray, and Sara thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One: and when thou didst bury the dead, I was with thee likewise. And when thou didst not delay to rise up, and leave thy dinner, to go and cover the dead, thy good deed was not hid from me: but I was with thee." And see the precept in 2 Esdras ii. 23; "Wheresoever thou findest the dead, take them and bury them, and I will give thee the first place in my resurrection."

The seven spiritual works are enumerated in the mnemonic line, "Consule, Plecte, Doce, Solare, Remitte, Fer, Ora" (Advise, Reprove, Teach, Console, Forgive, Endure, Intercede).

[2] *See* St. Mark v. 22, 23, 24.

[3] *See* St. Mark vi. 35 *to* 45; viii. 1 *to* 10.

[4] St. Matt. iv. 23.

Nicodemus[1] and the Samaritan woman;[2] reproving his Apostles for want of faith and hardness of heart;[3] teaching the people at all seasons;[4] consoling the widow of Nain,[5] and St. Mary Magdalen;[6] forgiving St. Peter for denying Him,[7] and his murderers for nailing Him to the cross;[8] bearing with the dulness and backwardness, not only of the Jews generally, but of his chosen disciples;[9] and offering for these last the great High Priestly Prayer, before He left them.[10] The above are works of spiritual mercy, the like of which disciples, in copying Him, may do according to the humble measure of their capacity. But in the highest and most blessed acts of mercy which the Saviour did, the expiation of sin by the Agony and bloody Sweat, the Cross and Passion and precious Death, and the working out in our nature of a righteousness spotless and stainless, sufficient to procure acceptance for the vilest and guiltiest, who turn to God in penitence and faith,—in these highest acts no creature can by possibility share, or contribute aught to them, as it is written; "None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: for the redemption of their soul is costly, and must be let alone for ever.[11] It was a profanation to apply human workmanship to the construction of the altar of burnt-offering: "If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt

[1] *See* St. John iii. 1 *to* 22.
[2] *See* St. John iv. 7 *to* 27.
[3] *See* St. Mark xvi. 14.
[4] *See* St. Mark. iv. 1, 2; vi. 34.
[5] *See* St. Luke vii. 13.
[6] *See* St. John xx. 15, 16.
[7] *See* St. Luke xxiv. 34; St. John xxi. 15, 16, 17.
[8] *See* St. Luke xxiii. 33, 34.
[9] *See* St. Mark vii. 17, 18, 19; St. Luke xxiv. 25; St. Matt. xvii. 17.
[10] St. John xvii.
[11] Psalm xlix. 7, 8 (Version of 1884).

not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."[1]

II. The passage of this grace of mercifulness from the mind of the Divine Master into that of the disciple, we will trace on the lines laid down by St. John: "Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God" (evidently meaning, such a love as God the Son shewed, was possessed with, was actuated and inspired by, when He laid down his life for us) "in him?"[2] Will you say; "I have not this world's good, and therefore have not the means of relieving my brother"? This is not true of thyself or any one else. The widow who threw in to the treasury of the temple "two mites, which make a farthing,"[3] had something to give, and she gave all that she had. Even without imitating her heroic act of self-denial, the very poorest among us has something more than is necessary for the supply of his own wants, and may spend that in relieving his neighbours. When the people asked St. John the Baptist to counsel them as to the way in which they should show the genuineness of their repentance, he answered them; "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise."[4] But be it so. Let us say, for argument's sake, that you have

[1] Exod. xx. 25.
[2] 1 John iii. 16, 17.
[3] *See* St. Mark xii. 42, 43, 44.
[4] St. Luke iii. 11.

none of this world's good at your disposal. It does not therefore follow that you have nothing to give, by which you can materially relieve your neighbour's wants. The assurance of sympathy is more consolatory to those in distress than gold and silver; and there is no one who may not say the bright kind word, and do the kind act expressive of sympathy. If money is not at hand, you may at all events bestow time and care on those who are in trouble. "Pure religion" (says St. James—the word used expresses the external manifestation of true religion, not its essence and inward principle)[1] "and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction"[2] ("visiting" implies something more than merely going to see,—implies care and tendance, as in the expression, "God hath *visited* his people")[3]—cannot each of us at least give this, even if he hath nothing else to give? Divines reckon up seven corporal works of mercy—visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, ransoming the captive, sheltering the homeless, burying the dead; and seven spiritual works—to counsel the perplexed, to reprove the erring, to teach the ignorant, to comfort the afflicted, to forgive the injurious, to

[1] The word is *θρησκεία*, of which Archbishop Trench says (*Synonyms of the New Testament*, xlviii.): "Θρησκεία (= 'cultus,' or perhaps more strictly, 'cultus *exterior*') is predominantly the ceremonial service of religion, of her whom Lord Brooke has so grandly named 'mother of form and fear,'—the external framework or body, of which *εὐσεβεία* is the informing soul. . . . St. James is not herein affirming these offices" (visiting the fatherless, &c., and keeping oneself unspotted from the world) "to be the sum total, nor yet the great essentials, of true religion, but declares them to be the body, the *θρησκεία*, of which godliness, or the love of God, is the informing soul."

[2] James i. 27.

[3] *See* St. Luke i. 68; vii. 16.

bear patiently with the perverse and irritating, to pray for all. Surely among these fourteen works of mercy there must at least be one, to which each of us might devote himself.

We have already had occasion to observe more than once how the sinfulness attaching to the nature of disciples necessarily modifies the several virtues, as they pass out of the mind of the Divine Master into theirs. And in the Beatitude before us we have the most striking case in point which occurs anywhere. We are here required to show mercy to others as the condition of its being shown to ourselves. I need hardly point out that such a condition is totally inapplicable to the Saviour Himself. He alone of all partakers of our nature needed not that mercy should be shown Him, being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,"[1] not indeed in sympathy, but by the perfect purity of his human nature. And then comes the reflexion in its full force to our minds; If He who needed no mercy, and, as needing it not, never received or experienced it, yet lived a continuous life of mercy, and by his Cross and Passion and precious Death purchased mercy for sinners, how much more must it behove us, who in our best spent days need mercy to be shown to us, and have to sue for it as often as we pray, and to receive it again and again through the blood of Christ and the word of absolution, to show towards our fellowmen that mercy, without the extension of which towards ourselves we could not stand for a moment under the eye of a holy God! And yet the disciple, who is in such momentary need

[1] Heb. vii. 26.

of mercy himself, doles it out with niggardly hand to others; whereas the Divine Master's heart is a full-charged fountain of mercy, which ever sends forth its streams into all the world, for the remission of human sins and the relief of human sorrows. It is indeed a deep truth, to which we here find a testimony, that any moral alliance with sin makes a man not more, but less lenient to his fellow-sinners; and that if we desire to have a keener sensibility and a stronger sympathy for the sorrows which men by sin have brought upon themselves, the only way to approximate towards this end is by separating ourselves more completely from the sin that is in us, and cultivating a higher standard of moral purity. The holy and undefiled One, just because He is holy and undefiled, is also the Sympathiser of sympathisers.

It would indeed be a most imperfect treatment of this Beatitude, if we were to pass away from it without indicating the precise nature of the connexion which subsists between the grace of mercifulness and the recompense annexed to it,—"they shall obtain mercy." Serious error may be incurred if this is not clearly perceived, and, when perceived, firmly held fast. Almighty God, then, is pleased to make our showing mercy to others *a condition* of our receiving mercy ourselves,—as is indicated also in the petition of the Lord's prayer; "Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."[1] A condition—nothing more and nothing less than that. A condition, not a procuring cause. When I help and pray for one who has slighted or

[1] St. Luke xi. 4.

injured me, it is not that act of mercy on my part which moves God to show mercy to me; nothing but the Saviour's blood and intercession can so move Him. Nor is my act of mercy even the instrumental cause of my receiving mercy. Faith, and only faith—that is, cordial belief in the efficacy of Christ's work—is the mental act, and the only mental act, by which I lay hold of God's mercy in Christ, and take it to myself as my own. But works of mercy towards others are the required *condition* which I must comply with, in order to my receiving the blessing. And if it be asked why God, who does nothing arbitrarily and without counsel, should have made this the required condition, I find the reason in the constitution of man's moral nature. It is one and the same valve by which the heart opens toward God, to receive mercy from Him, and towards our fellow-creatures, to distribute mercy to them. The result of this is that, where there is no distribution of mercy, there you will find no receptivity for it. St. John teaches us that it is one and the same valve by which the heart opens towards God and man, when he says; "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"[1] He adds, indeed, "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." Yes! there is a commandment distinctly prescribing the love of our neighbour, but that does not alter or supersede the fact that our nature is so constructed that we cannot love God truly without loving our

[1] 1 John iv. 20, 21.

neighbour also. And the circumstance that God has made our showing mercy the express condition of our receiving it, does not alter the natural fact that unreadiness to show mercy is only another side of unreadiness to receive it.

And hence it comes to pass that, in order to show mercy acceptably, we must first receive it ourselves. The secret of true compassionateness towards man is to have God's pardoning love to ourselves shed abroad in our hearts. This will open the heart to the sorrows of others, even if brought about by their sins, and this compassionateness practically shown will serve, both in the natural order of things, and as the stipulated condition, to open our hearts wider than before to our Father's love, and to enable us to receive a larger measure of it. For it is a law in the kingdom of heaven that faithful correspondence to grace secures an increase of grace. As it is said; "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace;"[1] "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."[2]

[1] St. John i. 16. [2] 2 Cor. iii. 18.

CHAPTER VII

PURITY OF HEART

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.—
St. Matt. v. 8.

We have already more than once noticed a sequence of thought in the Beatitudes. As the series progresses, each Beatitude opens out from that which immediately preceded it. Let us first then trace the connexion between the blessing upon "the merciful" in verse 7, and that upon "the pure in heart," which is now before us. This connexion will be seen, when we have seized it, to fence off a misconception as to the nature of the mercifulness, which our Lord has just commended to his disciples. There is then a spurious compassion—that of the natural man,—with which the mercy that is shown by Christ's disciples, the mercifulness which is a pronounced feature of the spiritual man's character, must by no means be confounded. Kind-hearted and benevolent sensualists are not uncommonly met with in the world, and the world's estimate of them is that the benevolence of their character to a great extent excuses its sensuality. A man may live a life of self-pleasing, bent upon no higher end than his own ease; he may even give the rein to sinful lusts and appetites, if

only he will compound for this indulgence of the flesh by tender-hearted sympathy with the miserable, and open-handed generosity to them as the occasion arises; for in the world's gospel, as in that of the Church, there is a generally accepted maxim that "charity shall cover the multitude of sins,"[1] widely different as the meaning is which this maxim has in the world's application of it from that which it bears in holy Scripture. In one or more passages of the New Testament we are put upon our guard against mistaking the mercifulness, which is a feature of natural character, for that which Christ requires of his disciples, and upon which He here pronounces his blessing. "The end of the commandment," says the Apostle of the Gentiles, "is charity out of a pure heart."[2] And the Apostle of the Circumcision echoes his words; "*See that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently."[3] The note had been struck in the first instance by the Divine Master, when, in his Sermon on the Mount, He made the blessing upon "the pure in heart" immediately follow the blessing upon "the merciful." The test of true mercifulness, discriminating it from that natural softness of soul which shows indulgence to self as well as to others, is its alliance with purity of heart.

But what exactly are we to understand by purity of heart? There are three senses in which the word "heart" is used in holy Scripture; and the purity, on which the blessing is pronounced, must necessarily take a different complexion with each of these three senses. First; the heart in certain connexions

[1] 1 Pet. iv. 8. [2] 1 Tim. i. 5. [3] 1 Pet. i. 22.

evidently signifies the conscience, as when it is said that "David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people;"[1] or as when St. John says, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God."[2] Again; the word heart is used in holy Scripture in the sense which it bears in ordinary conversation, for the affections and desires, as where our Lord says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."[3] And, thirdly, the word heart is used to signify the intention with which an action is done, the end which a man proposes to himself in doing it. Thus in Isaiah x. God says by the prophet that the Assyrian monarch has been commissioned by Himself to take vengeance upon that "hypocritical nation" the Jews—is in truth only the rod of God's anger, wherewith He designs to scourge his chosen people for their sins; and then continues thus; "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but *it is* in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few."[4] His whole design is self-aggrandisement and the extension of his empire by arms.

Now it is clear that if the word heart be taken in the first of these senses, as meaning the conscience, the pure in heart will be he who has "a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men."[5] If, on the other hand, we understand by the word heart the desires and affections of the soul, the pure in heart will then be he who "keeps himself from idols,"[6] who gives God the first place in his regards, and loves the creature in subordination to God—in

[1] 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. [2] 1 John iii. 21. [3] St. Matt. vi. 21.
[4] V. 7. [5] Acts xxiv. 16. [6] *See* 1 John v. 21.

Him and for Him. But if the heart be taken to signify the intention which gives direction to our actions, the object which we propose to ourselves in doing them, then the pure in heart will be he whose single intention in all that he does, or at all events whose supreme intention is, to please God (as St. Paul instructs those members of the Ephesian and Colossian Churches, who were slaves to heathen masters; "Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men . . . for ye serve the Lord Christ."[1]) So that this virtue of purity of heart resolves itself, when analysed, into three distinct though closely-associated virtues, the first of which may be called conscientiousness, the second heavenlymindedness, the third singlemindedness.

I. We will first glance, as we have done in considering the earlier Beatitudes, at the necessary modification which this grace of purity of heart must undergo in its passage from the mind of the Divine Master into that of the disciple. In rigorous strictness of speech, no disciple is or can be "pure in heart." For every disciple is "conceived and born in sin,"[2] and "the infection of nature doth remain" in him, even when he is "regenerated."[3] What is meant by such an one's being pure in heart is, that his heart has been cleansed by Christ's blood and God's grace;—

[1] Col. iii. 22, 23, 24.

[2] Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants.—Exhortation of the Priest to pray for the Regeneration of the Infant.

[3] Art. ix.

"pure" in his case means "purified." But the Divine Master, on the other hand, is intrinsically and substantially pure, even in his human nature, the usual law of human generation ("Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me"[1]) having been set aside in his case, so that the angel sent to announce his birth called the Infant, whom St. Mary was to bear, "that holy thing which shall be born of thee."[2] He alone of all the children of men could say of Himself, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,"[3]—finds nothing in me at all congenial to that evil which He would fain inject into my human soul. And accordingly his human conscience was always, to use Bishop Ken's beautiful image, "as the noontide clear,"—not a single smirch flecking it. "He was made sin for us," says St. Paul, "who knew no sin,"[4]—was conscious of none. Then, as to the affections of his soul—his ardent love for the Father, his zeal to glorify the Father, and to do and suffer all the Father's will, had all the force of a consuming passion, as He Himself indicated when He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;"[5] "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"[6] While to his purity of intention in the exercise of his ministry He Himself bare witness when He said, "I seek not mine own glory."[7] . . . "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him."[8]

[1] Psalm li. 5, P.B.V. [2] St. Luke i. 35. [3] St. John xiv. 30.
[4] 2 Cor. v. 21. [5] St. John iv. 34. [6] St. Luke xii. 50.
[7] St. John viii. 50. [8] St. John vii. 18.

II. But we, the rest, can only be pure by being purified through the operation of his blood and his grace.

1. And first, *as to the conscience.* In regard to the stains of past sins with which unhappily it may have been befouled, holy Scripture teaches very explicitly what the means are, both external to ourselves and internal, which must be used for washing them away. The mean external is the blood of Christ. Referring to the ceremonial purification, prescribed by the law for one who had contracted ceremonial uncleanness by touching a dead body, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says; "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"[1] And again, in the same Epistle, in allusion to the same striking feature of the Mosaic ritual; "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience."[2] The mean internal is with equal explicitness said to be faith. "God," says St. Peter, "put no difference between us and them" (the Gentiles), "purifying their hearts by faith."[3] And St. Paul to the Romans; "Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood."[4] But observe what the words "a purged conscience" imply—an implication often overlooked, I believe, or not clearly apprehended. The conscience it is which brings our past sins to our remembrance, which dis-

[1] Heb. ix. 13, 14.
[2] Heb. x. 22.
[3] Acts xv. 9.
[4] Rom. iii. 25.

turbs us with the thought of them, which makes us anxious and apprehensive about their consequences, which echoes these sins in its inmost cell, and says, "I did them, and ever since I did them they have been a burden of which I have longed to be rid." Now if a befouled conscience echoes to us our sins, a conscience purged by faith in Christ's blood must echo to us the forgiveness of our sins—our full and free pardon and acceptance, our sins notwithstanding, through the atoning work of Christ. It is true, no doubt, that our sins are matters which we know from our experience, whereas the propitiation made for sins by the blood of the cross is an event handed down by history, but of which we have had no personal cognisance. But this is the very province of faith, to realise things unseen, things transacted long ago in the past, or to be transacted hereafter in the future; to give to such things the moral cogency and influence of our present surroundings, of the things which enter into our experience. A purged conscience must, by its very nature and constitution, be conscious of forgiveness.[1]

And no sooner does this consciousness find place in us, than the will is roused to *keep* pure that which has been *made* pure. It is God's grace which rouses the will to maintain this purity of conscience; but with grace must concur strenuous endeavour. Natural life cannot be maintained in full vigour without bodily exercise. And spiritual life follows the analogy of

[1] This consciousness, through faith, of our being forgiven can only be by the Holy Spirit enabling us to believe. The conscience must "bear its witness in the Holy Ghost" (*see* Rom. ix. 1). The Spirit itself must "bear witness with our spirit, that we are the" forgiven and accepted "children of God" (Rom. viii. 16).

natural. It is hopeless to live the spiritual life without at least an honest endeavour to "keep conscience as the noontide clear." "Herein do I exercise myself," said St. Paul before Felix (if that profligate had any shred of a conscience left, how must the words have seemed to him to be charged with accents of stinging reproof, presenting to him as they did a moral course so entirely different from his own), "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men."[1] Relieved of the burden of its guilt by faith in the blood of Christ, the soul feels apprehensive lest the burden should be again incurred.

2. Next, as to the heart, in the modern and popular usage of the term,—*the affections of the soul.* The heart, to be pure in this sense of the word, must be undivided, given whole to God. It is easy to *speak* of giving an undivided heart to God—easy, when in good health and prosperous circumstances, to *imagine* that we do so, while all the time in the inner centre of our being we are clinging to the world and to the creature with the fondest and most affectionate embrace. The many pleasant things which God leaves to us still, when in the order of his Providence He takes some away, act as *lean-to's* for the soul; and we are not aware how much of our weight we are really throwing, not upon God, but upon them. It is not purity of heart to feel respecting any thing or any person, that they are altogether indispensable to our happiness; that, were they to be removed, our happiness would be utterly wrecked, and life would be no longer worth

[1] Acts xxiv. 16.

living; for to feel thus is to erect a creature into the place which God alone should occupy. And doubtless one great object, with which God sends straitened circumstances or bereavement, is that He may throw us back upon communion with Himself, as that which, even in the absence of earthly solace, can satisfy the soul, and so bring us to that purity of heart which He would desire to see in us. If it should be objected to what has been said, that surely God would have us *thankfully appreciate* those earthly blessings with which He has surrounded us, the answer is that thankful appreciation of a blessing is one thing, the idolizing or placing our chief good in it quite another. Doubtless we may love God's creatures and gifts, but it must be in Him and for Him, as his good gifts, which He may remove whenever it pleases Him, and as deriving from Him all their power of refreshing and consoling us. "I am allowed," said Mr. Cecil, respecting earthly solaces and blessings, "to take up the pitcher and drink, but the moment I begin to admire it and say 'What a beautiful pitcher it is,' I find that it is dashed to pieces." [1]

3. As to the heart *in the sense of the intention*, which, as we have seen, is one of the meanings which the word bears in Holy Scripture. Purity of heart in this sense is purity of intention—a single eye in all we do, even in the most minute and trivial works of our calling to God's glory and service, and to the fulfilment of the task, which He has providentially assigned to us. It is very observable that the Apostles, in enjoining this purity of heart, take their examples of the actions, in which the grace is to be

[1] Cecil's *Remains*.

displayed, from the routine of homely, everyday duty. Thus St. Paul says, led no doubt to this particular example by the directions which he is giving as to meats offered to idols, but yet broadly and generally, without any sort of limitation of the rule to the particular question which had drawn forth the precept; "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."[1] Eating and drinking are actions so necessary to the maintenance of life, that several times each day we are obliged to the performance of them. The Apostle teaches that these very ordinary and commonplace actions may be so performed that God may be glorified by the performance of them. The food may be acknowledged as his gift, for which the heart lifts itself up to Him in thanksgiving and praise; and it may be taken, not only nor chiefly with the view of satisfying the appetite, but with the higher object of making the body and its members a fitter and more effective instrument of the service of Christ. The drudgery and routine work of servants, often purely manual, and demanding scarcely any effort of mind for its performance, is another Apostolic example of the humble and commonplace actions in which, by throwing into them a good intention, God may be served and glorified. "Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God" (the will of God, because the service of servants, as much as the

[1] 1 Cor. x. 31.

higher occupations of their employers, is one of the factors in the great social system which God's Providence has ordained, and which system is to be carried on so long as this world endures) "from the heart."[1] So that even servile labour may be glorified and turned into a sacrifice, by having a good and pure intention thrown into it. And if servile labour, why not the work of any other lawful calling?[2]

If, then, we would embody in our practice the spirit of these Apostolic precepts, we must bestow a great deal of pains and study on doing well those small commonplace duties, which are of no interest in themselves, and in which there is no room for the gratification of vanity. And, generally speaking, we shall prize most highly and cultivate most carefully those duties, into the doing of which a corrupt or questionable motive cannot insinuate itself. I have often thought that earnest private prayer, when we have entered into our closet and shut our door, is one of the most satisfactory evidences we can have of the working of Divine Grace within us, for this simple reason, that there can be but one motive to such a course of action, and that (more or less) a godly one. One who prays earnestly, where none but He that seeth in secret can note the prayer, must at all events believe that God "is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."[3]

The blessing annexed to (perhaps I should

[1] Eph. vi. 5, 6.

[2] This thought, and the preceding one respecting "eating and drinking," will be found in another connexion, and somewhat more expanded, in Part III. Chap. IX. "On guarding the heart at the avenue of moral action."

[3] *See* Heb. xi. 6.

rather say, involved in and flowing out of) purity of heart is the vision of God—"They shall see God." In its highest sense, this blessing belongs only to our Lord Himself in his sinless humanity. Being perfectly pure in conscience, in affection, in intention, He in his human nature saw the Father, when on the Ascension Day He carried up his human body into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God.[1] And He has seen Him ever since, sitting on the throne with Him to govern the universe in his Name,[2] standing before Him to intercede for the Church militant here in earth.[3] As for ourselves, it is not given us to see God by direct intuition (for He is described as "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," and as being One "whom no man hath seen, or can see"[4]), but only in and through Christ, as it is written, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."[5] Just as the sunlight, which, if it streamed upon us in its full power, would be unbearable by the eye, and would only dazzle and blind us, but which yet, when refracted in the drops of rain, and looked at through that medium, becomes visible in the rainbow, so the divine perfections, refracted to our mind's eye in the pure and sinless humanity of Christ, become intelligible and attractive, and we see God both in his person and in his work, as He said to St. Philip; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."[6]

But this revelation of God in Christ is for all man-

[1] *See* St. Mark xvi. 19; St. Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9.
[2] *See* Heb. i. 3; ii. 7, 8; St. Matthew xxviii. 18.
[3] *See* Acts vii. 56; Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24.
[4] 1 Tim. vi. 16. [5] St. John i. 18. [6] St. John xiv. 9.

kind,—all who have reason are receptive of it. What we are now in search of is some vision of God, which is the exclusive privilege of the pure in heart; it must be something practical and experimental, not merely of the speculative order. The pure in heart shall see God both here on earth, and more fully and in another method above, both the earthly and the heavenly vision being comprised in that wonderfully profound verse of the seventeenth Psalm (ver. 15), "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." This beholding of the face of God must take its interpretation from the custom of Eastern courts, in which only the very highest nobility were admitted to the sovereign's presence, and from that passage of the Book of Esther, in which we read that none might approach King Ahasuerus on penalty of death, except such to whom he might hold out the golden sceptre as a token of acceptance.[1] To behold the face of God, then, is to have a comfortable sense of his favour, and of our acceptance with Him, shed abroad in the heart. And how is this to be? It is only "in righteousness" that we can behold God's face—the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith, imparted to us by the working of his Spirit in our hearts, concurrently with our cordial endeavours after holiness. On the moment of our sincerely believing we are accepted freely, and through a sense of that acceptance have peace with God. But on the ground of that acceptance we go on to cultivate "virtue, temperance, patience, godliness,"[2] and all the other graces of the Christian character. And each advance in these is

[1] *See* Esther iv. 11. [2] *See* 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7.

an inlet of spiritual light, opens the eye of the soul to discern more of the beauty and blessedness, the wisdom and love of the Divine character, and "makes our calling and election sure"[1] to the convictions of our own mind. And the words that follow in the Psalm, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," exhibit to us the vision which he who is pure in heart shall have of God *hereafter*, this being a vision of Christ which shall transform him into Christ's likeness,[2] and a vision in which the risen and glorified body shall bear its part, no less than the spiritual faculty. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."[3] Then shall we be able to bear that sight of the Saviour in his resurrection glory, which even the beloved disciple, when in the flesh, could not endure, but, when he saw Him, he "fell at his feet as dead."[4] Then shall be fulfilled to us that word of the prophet, "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty,"[5] "his head and *his* hairs white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."[6] And the sight shall be a transforming one, as indeed the spiritual sight of the Saviour has already been mentally,—a *completely* transforming one, which shall put the finishing stroke on the spiritual resemblance to Christ that has long been progressing, and shall at the same time make the glorified body a suitable tene-

[1] *See* 2 Pet. i. 10. [2] *See* 1 John iii. 2. [3] Phil. iii. 21.
[4] *See* Rev. i. 17. [5] Isaiah xxxiii. 17. [6] *See* Rev. i. 14, 15.

ment for the thoroughly sanctified soul and spirit. "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is,"[1]—"see him as he is," no longer in "a glass darkly, but face to face."[2] Purify us, O Lord, by thy blood and by thy grace, in our consciences, in our affections, in our intentions, that we may be found worthy at the last to enjoy that beatific vision.

[1] 1 John iii. 2. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

CHAPTER VIII

PEACEMAKING

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.—St. Matt. v. 9.

It is interesting to note, as a thoughtful student will not fail to note, how the Beatitudes are constructed upon the lines of the Decalogue in its two tables, one of which exhibits our duty towards God, the other our duty towards our neighbour. After the fundamental benediction upon the grace of poverty of spirit, out of which the ensuing graces all develope themselves, the Beatitudes proceed in pairs, the first of each pair describing a certain attitude of mind towards God, while the second exhibits the corresponding mental attitude towards our neighbour. He who in true penitence mourns over his sins towards God will show the genuineness of this mourning by meekness in his dealings with man. He who earnestly longs after righteousness, showing thereby how deeply he realises his own need of it, will be in no frame of mind to be harsh towards his brethren, —his consciousness of his own indesert will make him merciful. While he who has tasted internal peace by being pure in heart (without which purity of heart there can be no peace), will be prepared and

qualified to diffuse that peace, which he has himself experienced. Let so much suffice to point out the connexion of thought between this Beatitude and that which immediately precedes it. It has been part of our plan in considering these Beatitudes, first to contemplate each particular virtue as it exists in the mind of the Divine and sinless Master, and then to note any modifications which it must necessarily undergo in its transfer by grace into the mind of the disciple.

I. While of every virtue recited in this series of eight, our Lord is the great Exemplar, there is not one which is more distinctive, more specially characteristic of Him, than that of peacemaking. He *brought* peace. He *made* peace. He *bequeathed* peace.

First, He *brought* peace. The choir of Angels on his birth-night celebrated the great era, which his birth inaugurated, as one which should redound not only to the glory to God, but to the establishment of peace on earth and good-will towards men.[1] "He came and preached peace," says St. Paul, "to you which were afar off, and them that were nigh."[2]

Then, secondly, *He made peace*—between God and man; between man and his neighbour; between man and himself. *Between God and man.* "It pleased *the Father*," says St. Paul, "having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself."[3] And again,—"It behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."[4] "He truly suffered,"

[1] *See* St. Luke ii. 13, 14.
[2] Eph. ii. 17.
[3] Col. i. 19, 20.
[4] Heb. ii. 17.

says the Church of England in her Second Article, "was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us." By the reconciliation of the Father, who, so far from being an enemy to fallen man, yearned over him from the moment of his fall with the bowels of compassion, and had determined in the counsels of Eternity to redeem him, is meant the reconciliation of the sterner but inalienable attributes of the Divine character—Justice, Holiness, and Truth—to the salvation of man, Christ having satisfied on our behalf all claims of the Divine Law upon us, whether for the endurance of penalty, or the yielding of obedience, as it is said; "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*."[1]—*Between man and his neighbour*, also, our Lord made peace. If it should be thought that He Himself gave the very opposite account of the purpose and effect of his mission in those words of his in St. Matthew x.; "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth" (a contradiction apparently to the words of the Angels at the Nativity): "I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother . . . And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household,"[2] the obvious answer to this objection is, that He speaks here of immediate and not ultimate results, and that ultimate results are often the very reverse of immediate. A patient's life can only be preserved by cutting out a gangrene or cutting off a limb; dreadful pain is the *immediate* result, but it is in order to, and as the means of, the patient's health and ease. The condi-

[1] Psalm lxxxv. 10.

[2] St. Matt. x. 34, 35, 36.

tions of the pardon of sin are repentance and humiliation, both of which are bitter; but these bitters are only the immediate results of the process of grace, the ultimate result being that peace which flows from a sense of pardon. So the coming of the Peacemaker with offers of reconciliation into a world lying in wickedness, striking athwart men's depraved wills and bad passions, as it did, stirred up at first variance between man and man; the *cause* of which variance was really human wickedness, its *occasion* only being the Advent of the Peace-bringer. And the variance was a temporary, and not a permanent, an immediate and not an ultimate, result. That ultimate result was, as St. Paul teaches, the reconciliation of those two great branches of the human family, between whom hitherto the strongest antipathies both of race and religion had subsisted; "He is our peace, who hath made both" (both Jew and Gentile) "one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us;* having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."[1] "Other sheep I have," said our Lord Himself, speaking of the same reconciliation of Jew and Gentile by his own agency, "which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."[2]—Finally, *between man and himself* Christ makes peace, for the particulars of which peace we may refer back to the preceding Chapter on the blessing

[1] Eph. ii. 14, 15, 16. [2] St. John x. 16, R.V.

of the pure in heart. He makes peace in the *conscience* through the blood of the cross, and the assurance of pardon thereby. He gives rest to the *heart*, ever naturally in quest of happiness, when He purges it by his grace from earthly idolatries and enables it to find satisfaction in communion with God. And He gives peace to the *aims and intentions* of the soul, when He subordinates them all to one supreme ruling purpose, that of serving Christ, glorifying God, and benefiting men—a single ruling purpose this, though under three different aspects.

Finally, our Lord *bequeathed peace* as his parting legacy to his disciples. "Peace I leave with you," said he on the eve of his passion (using so far the ordinary form of valediction customary in Jewish society; but He did not stop here; the peace which He leaves is not *wished* simply, but *given;* as the acts of the Divine will immediately take effect and become deeds, so it is with the wishes of the God-man; to each of them is given an immediate effect, so He continues): "my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you,"[1] (let Society lavish its barren courtesies, its good wishes and nothing more; my good wishes are gifts; my peace is to become yours, to distil, like a precious unguent from my own heart, upon the troubled waters of yours—"My peace I *give* unto you.")

II. Hitherto we have spoken of the Divine Master as the great Exemplar of the grace of peace-making. We are now to consider the disciple as deriving from Him the same grace, and exhibiting it according to his capacity, and with certain modifications arising from

[1] St. John xiv. 27.

the difference of his position and circumstances. One of these modifications occurs to the mind on the first glance at the subject. The Divine Master *possessed* peace in two capacities, first, as a Person in the Godhead who, in virtue of his Divine Nature, was partaker from all eternity of that "peace of God, which passeth all understanding," [1] and, secondly, as a perfectly sinless man, stainless in conscience, pure in heart, upright in will, into whose human spirit flowed down continually God's peace, from the unbroken communion which He always maintained with the Father. But the disciple does not possess peace as his own; he cannot lay claim to it as a right; he can only derive it from his Master, through the blood of the cross and the santification of the Spirit.

And that he should so derive peace into his heart and conscience, coming to his Master for it, and accepting it from Him in that assurance of pardon, which lies at the root of all peace for a sinner, this is the first and indispensable condition of his making peace, and inheriting the peacemaker's blessing. Dream not of making peace between thy neighbours, or of being an influence of peace among them, unless first being justified by faith thou hast found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ![2] A man cannot diffuse a blessing of which he is not himself partaker. Noah cannot send forth a dove from the ark unless he has first admitted a dove into it.[3] But when this dove of peace has by God's grace settled down upon our hearts, it brings with it a peaceable disposition, and prompts us according to our power to make peace.

[1] Phil. iv. 7. [2] *See* Rom. v. 1. [3] *See* Gen. viii. 8.

But, although the partaking of God's peace ourselves disposes us to be peaceable towards others, this does not dispense with the honest endeavour of our wills to "follow after peace," in fulfilment of God's express and often repeated commandment. "Seek peace," says the Psalmist (and the Apostle Peter echoes and cites this passage of the Psalms), "and ensue it,"[1] —follow after it with hot haste, and desire to overtake it, as the hunter follows after the deer. And the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses the same language; "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness."[2] And St. Paul to the Romans; "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."[3] And St. James; "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated,"[4]—remarkably coinciding, by the way, with the circumstance that in the series of the Beatitudes the blessing of the peacemakers follows immediately upon that of the pure in heart. On the precept to pursue peace an ancient writer well says: "He saith not, If peace follow thee receive it: but, even if it flies from thee, follow it. For example: if thou shouldest have quarrelled with any, if he first invites thee to peace, then peace follows *thee:* with joy receive it. But if he persevere in evil, then peace is hidden from thine eyes; but do thou, as a son of peace, knock at the door of peace —and this is to seek peace. Say not, He was the first to do the wrong, and ought to be the first to make the apology; thou art more glorious, if, though injured, thou ensuest peace, than if thou endeavourest

[1] Psalm xxxiv. 14, quoted by St. Peter (1 Peter iii. 11).
[2] Heb. xii. 14. [3] Rom. xii. 18. [4] James iii. 17.

after vengeance."[1] There is in almost all men, though much more manifestly in some than others, a disposition to litigiousness, and to stand very jealously upon their rights, without bating a jot of them, which must be crucified and mortified, if we are to live as Christ's disciples in the spirit of this Beatitude. I do not deny that cases may sometimes occur, in which the interests of the public and of society may demand that we should insist upon our just claims, nor that a man is bound to maintain firmly the prerogatives and privileges attaching to the position which he happens to occupy, (which may seem to be a duty rather to the position than to the person holding it); but even in these cases every personal feeling of unkindness towards rivals, or competitors, or those who show a disposition to encroach, must be as far as possible suppressed. What would have become of us all, had our Blessed Lord shown a disposition to stand upon his rights? And how does a vein of litigiousness look, when regarded in the light of such passages as these; "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;"[2] "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also;"[3] "Now

[1] Quoted by Dr. Neale in his *Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediæval Writers* (*in loc.*).

[2] Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7, 8.

[3] St. Matt. v. 40.

therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to* be defrauded?"[1]

But the Christian grace which we are engaged in considering goes a step in advance of peaceableness or a peaceable disposition;—the blessing is pronounced, not upon the peaceable, but upon peacemakers. The first and highest order of peacemakers are those who are instrumental in reconciling man to God, and so in reconciling him to himself. Nor is this reconciliation of man to God so exclusively restrained to Christian ministers, though indeed these are the official depositaries of it, (as it is said, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God"[2]), that others are precluded from having any share in a work so lofty and so blessed. Not only *can* you not restrain a man, who has himself received the glad tidings of the Gospel by a genuine and operative faith, from disseminating those tidings privately, as opportunity offers, and seeking to communicate to others the peace which has entered in his own soul, but you might not do so, if you could. Must we not suppose that the hundreds of foreign Jews—"Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,"[3] and so forth—who received the word of life from the mouth of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, spread abroad the knowledge of it in their own countries, when they reached their homes? Can it be believed that the Ethiopian eunuch, who, as the result of his

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 7. [2] 2 Cor. v. 20. [3] *See* Acts ii. 8 *to* 12.

interview with St. Philip the Deacon, "went on his way rejoicing," locked up in his own breast, on his return to the Court of Queen Candace, the revelation of the saving Name, which Philip had preached to him?[1] Not only do "the Spirit and the bride" (which last may be thought to be the Church officially represented by her ordained ministers) "say, Come;" but it is not obscurely intimated that the private Christian may join with them in issuing the invitation; "And let him that heareth say, Come."[2]

So much for the setting forward of the highest kind of peace, which is competent to every Christian in his own private circle. But the word peacemaking more readily carries our thoughts to human society, so full of jars and dissensions, amidst which the true disciple is felt and recognised as a peaceful healing influence. By kind interpretation of motives, by refusing to receive reports to the disadvantage of others, and, where the presence of faults of character or conduct cannot be denied, by minimising them, and being ready to make such excuses for them as can in truth be made, the contribution which the true disciple makes to the social life of his circle is in the direction of harmony and goodwill. And thus he is very influential for good, though in an entirely unobtrusive and unostentatious way. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace,"[3] says the Apostle James, as if he anticipated the objection that after all there are no immediate visible results of the peacemaker's work. I take "the fruit of righteousness" here to be peace itself, interpreting St. James's phraseology by that of Isaiah; "The work

[1] *See* Acts viii. 35, 39. [2] Rev. xxii. 17. [3] James iii. 18.

of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."[1] A peacemaker sows peace, which in God's own time and method shall spring up in the hearts of others; but if he should not see at present any results of his work, let him remember that what a man sows must work for a long time beneath the earth, before the blade appears above the surface. And in like manner the peace, which is sown "of them that make peace," is often not immediately apparent. Yet let not those who have laboured for peace be thrown out of heart by being thwarted in the prosecution of it. Their efforts and endeavours after peace shall at least return into their own bosom, as indeed the Lord promised to the Seventy in sending them forth; "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not,"—if there be no person in the house who shows any receptivity for the peace you come to preach and to offer, think not that even then your labour is lost—"it shall turn to you again."[2] The dove which Noah sent forth from the ark returned to him twice, and the second time with an olive leaf—the well known token of peace—plucked off in her mouth.[3] A beautiful emblem of the way in which those, who from a heart at peace send forth peaceful influences into a world of strife, shall be recompensed by an influx of peace into their own souls.

It needs to be observed, in concluding our con-

[1] Isaiah xxxii. 17. [2] St. Luke x. 5, 6.
[3] Gen. viii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

sideration of this grace, that the tongue, as on the one hand it is the means of stirring up strife and dissension among men ("Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out," says the wise man; "so where *there is* no talebearer, the strife ceaseth"[1]), so, when brought under the control of Divine Grace, it is the peacemaker's implement. It is so pre-eminently in that highest kind of peacemaking, the reconciliation of man to God, which is effected by the tongue of the Apostle or Evangelist. But no less is the tongue the great implement in the promotion of social peace; and he who seeks to set forward peace and harmony in the circle he moves in can only hope to achieve this great end by the government of the tongue. "There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword," says the wise man; "but the tongue of the wise *is* health."[2] There are some persons who, whether from a tendency to sourness of disposition, or from that love of contradiction which seems inherent in certain natures, or merely to win the credit of saying smart and sarcastic things, have a maladroit gift of touching the point on which others are particularly susceptible. They have the trick, and they indulge it, of hitting a blot in everything, however generally satisfactory it may be,—prompted in some cases by the pitiful vanity of showing how clearly *they* can discern flaws which are overlooked by ordinary eyes. The ground on which such persons justify their disparaging criticism, is that they always honestly say what they think, and tell the truth in a blunt and straightforward manner. But they forget that they have another duty to their

[1] Prov. xxvi. 20. [2] Prov. xii. 18.

fellowmen besides that of truth — the duty of courtesy, and kindly construction of acts and words, the main drift of which is good. And though a smart sarcasm may amuse other people, it may wound him who is the subject of it; and can the amusement created by it countervail the pain thus given to a Christian brother? So far as any of us have the habits of mind referred to, we must correct them with a strong hand, if we would inherit the peacemaker's blessing.

And what is that blessing? "They shall be called the children of God," that is, recognised and acknowledged as his children by men here, by God Himself hereafter — a promise which wonderfully coincides with that passage of St. John, when it is rightly translated and understood; "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"[1] This does not mean, as might at first sight appear, that the great instance of God's love for us is his granting us to be called his children; but that He hath bestowed upon us his wonderful love, *in order that* we may be called—recognised and acknowledged as—his children;[2] the bestowing of God's love upon us is the cause, our recognition as God's children the effect. God's love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us, engenders in us love towards men, so that we diffuse an atmosphere of love and peace around us, and thus are recognised

[1] 1 John iii. 1.

[2] The original is; *Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ πατὴρ, ἵνα τέκνα Θεοῦ κληθῶμεν.*

as his children. For how are children recognised as being the offspring of particular persons? Is it not by their likeness to their parents? Our Saviour, in inculcating upon his disciples, at a later period of the Sermon on the Mount, the forgiveness of injuries, which is an obvious endeavour after peacemaking on one side of a quarrel, tells them that this is the way to approve themselves as children of the heavenly Father; "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (known as his children by your resemblance to Him); "for" (his actions are those of kindness and love, not to his friends only, but to those also who are at variance with Him) "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."[1] Such pacific conduct, consistently pursued, will not fail to secure the recognition of our Divine sonship even from men, the worst of whom will feel that there has been an influence for peace working in their midst. But if all our endeavours after peace should seem to meet with repulse, and our experience should be that of the Psalmist, "I labour for peace, but when I speak unto them thereof: they make them ready to battle,"[2] the heavenly Father's recognition shall at least crown our efforts. His Spirit, even here on earth, shall "bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."[3] And more manifestly and pub-

[1] St. Matt. v. 44, 45. [2] Psalm cxx. 6. P.B.V.
[3] *See* Rom. viii. 16.

licly shall the Divine recognition be given at that final "manifestation of the sons of God," for which we are told that "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth,"[1] when, to use the language of our Burial Service, God's well-beloved Son shall pronounce that blessing to all that love and fear Him, saying, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world."[2]

[1] *See* Rom. viii. 19.

[2] Collect in "The Order for the Burial of the Dead." It should be observed however that, as the passage stands in the original of St. Matt. xxv. 34, the word "children," though undoubtedly implied, is not expressed; it is simply, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."

CHAPTER IX

ENDURANCE OF PERSECUTION

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.—MATT. v. 10.

THE connexion of thought between this concluding Beatitude, and that upon the peacemakers which immediately precedes it, is exhibited in the two last verses of Psalm cxx, which are thus given in the version of our Prayer-Book; "My soul hath long dwelt among them: that are enemies unto peace. I labour for peace, but when I speak unto them thereof: they make them ready to battle." St. Paul, when exhorting Christians to live peaceably with all men, very significantly intimates a doubt whether in all cases it would be practicable to do so. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."[1] Both the Lord and his Apostles gave distinct warnings that the peace after which his disciples were to follow would not be always attained—that the attitude of hostility to them, which the world would take up, would sometimes preclude it. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus," says St. Paul, "shall suffer persecution."[2] The sequence of thought, then, between this and the preceding

[1] Rom. xii. 18. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 12.

Beatitude is this: "Foiled in your endeavours after peace as you will often be, you may nevertheless entitle yourselves to a high blessing, if you will meekly suffer persecution for righteousness' sake."

I. This final Beatitude is the climax and crown of the whole series. The highest development which the spiritual mind can reach, when the germ of it, which is poverty of spirit, is fully unfolded, is the taking up of the cross of the world's opposition and despitefulness, which our Lord Himself took up, and to the acceptance and endurance of which He invites all who will come after him.[1] I say, "which our Lord Himself took up." For is He not indeed the great exemplar, as of every other grace, so especially of the meek endurance of persecution for righteousness' sake? There never was, nor ever could have been, nor can be, a persecution at once more rancorous and more unjustifiable than that which was directed against Him, and which issued in the death of the cross,—never any more unjustifiable, because He was absolutely sinless, and had exhibited to the world a perfect example of love to God and man, which could not be said of any martyr to the truth except Himself; never any more rancorous, for the same reason, inasmuch as the rancour, which virtue calls out from the devil and his agents, is in exact proportion to the perfectness of the virtue which is exhibited under their eyes. And never, we may add, was persecution more intensely painful to the victim of it, because to the physical tortures of the cross, there was superadded in his case the agony of the garden, that mysterious and

[1] *See* St. Luke ix. 23.

to us inexplicable pressure of a world's sin upon the human soul of the Redeemer, which wrung from him the bloody sweat, and which afterwards upon the cross elicited that bitterest of all bitter cries, which have ever risen to Heaven from suffering humanity; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"[1] And as to his meek endurance of the persecution, what tongue, what pen but an inspired one can adequately or suitably describe it? "And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand."[2] Observe that He did not dash the thorny wreath away from his head, nor refuse, as He might have done, to hold the reed, but yielded Himself up to undergo the mockery. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting."[3] "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."[4] Meeker endurance could not be, nor more wanton persecution, nor more malignant wickedness directing it, so that all that is found of this kind, whether among the old prophets, or among his own disciples in later times, must have fallen infinitely short of what He endured, and can hardly be worthy, in comparison of it, to be taken into any account at all.

And now, having arrived at the last of those features of the mind of Christ, which must by Divine grace be reproduced in the minds of his people, let

[1] St. Matt. xxvii. 46; St. Mark xv. 34.
[2] St. Matt. xxvii. 29.
[3] Isaiah l. 6.
[4] Isaiah liii. 7.

us for a moment, before we pass on, glance back to the previous features, and mark their orderly sequence and development. In the first Beatitude our Lord is presented to us, as it were, in his manger-cradle; He has emptied Himself by "poverty of spirit," and condescends to appear upon earth as a human infant wrapped in swaddling clothes.[1]—The Babe has come into a world of sorrow as well as of sin; his birth is marked by massacre and lamentation;[2] and He grows up to be a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,"[3]—the Mourner of mourners.—"Meekness and lowliness of heart" are his chief characteristics,[4] as indeed his unspeakable condescension had already declared them to be.—He hungered for human souls, and for the fulfilment in and through Himself of the Father's will, and of the great counsel of man's salvation.[5]—He shewed "mercifulness" to all the suffering,—to the bereaved,[6] to the sick in body, to those who were burdened in mind with the sense of sin.[7]—He was "pure in heart," "unspotted from the world," withdrew Himself when they would have made Him a king,[8] was true to the great ends of God's glory and man's salvation, as the needle to the pole.—He was "the Prince of Peace"[9] who brought peace with Him to plant it upon earth, who bequeathed it to his disciples, who cemented it by his death.—And the feature of his mind, which was most conspicuously manifested at the end of his earthly career, was his endurance of persecution,—

[1] *See* St. Luke ii. 7, 12.
[2] *See* St. Matt. ii. 16, 17, 18.
[3] Isaiah liii. 3.
[4] *See* St. Matt. xi. 29.
[5] *See* St. John iv. 34.
[6] *See* St. Luke vii. 13.
[7] *See* St. Matt. ix. 2; St. Luke vii. 47, 48.
[8] *See* St. John vi. 15.
[9] *See* Isaiah ix. 6.

nay, of death upon the cross,—"for righteousness' sake."—And thus the Beatitudes, which began with Christ in the manger, and go on receiving their fulfilment in Him throughout his career, close with Christ upon the cross.

II. In tracing this last feature of the mind of Christ, as it must be exhibited in his disciples, observe first that this highest of Christian graces is a *passive* virtue. The passive virtues, because our Lord so remarkably exemplified them, take rank before the active. He, being the Son of the woman, not of the man, and holding of human nature therefore exclusively by its tenderer side, gave a prominence to the woman's special virtues—submission, resignation, patient endurance on behalf of others—which they never had before, which in any system of heathen morality they never could have had.[1]

Yet, when we speak of passive virtues and their beauty, let it not be thought that there can be any virtue independent of an exercise of the will. We see our Lord Himself in the garden accepting voluntarily the "persecution" of the cross, when, after first deprecating the cup of suffering, He afterwards prays, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."[2] The persecuted might escape persecution by recanting his Christian profession, and with it his protest against the world's error and wickedness; but cheerfully, cordially, lovingly, with the full concurrence of his will, he consents to endure it. It is not the

[1] See this thought more fully drawn out in Chapter I. of this Part, "Christ's virtues of the feminine type." [2] St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42.

having the cross laid upon one, but the taking it up and carrying it, which entitles a man to the blessing. "If I yet preach circumcision," says St. Paul, "why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased."[1] If he had but preached circumcision as necessary to salvation, he would not have come into any collision with the Judaizing Christians, and their hostility and opposition to him would have at once collapsed. But he could not, he would not for the whole world, compromise the truth of the Gospel with which he was put in trust. And accordingly he was made to bear in his body "the marks of the Lord Jesus"[2]—not the brand of circumcision, which was all that his persecutors bore, but the nobler dint which the hardships and sufferings incidental to his missionary labours had made upon his bodily frame.

The persecution of which the Lord here speaks, and on which He pronounces a blessing, is not that which might be endured in any or every cause—it must be "for righteousness' sake." In the next verse, where He expands this Beatitude as being the crowning one of the series, and as that which puts the finishing stroke upon the blessedness of his disciples, the phrase "for righteousness' sake" is exchanged for the entirely equivalent one, which however presents another aspect of the same idea, "for my sake." The cause of righteousness is the cause of the Lord Jesus, for He came to set up on earth the kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of righteousness, as it is said of Him in Psalm xlv., "A sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy

[1] Gal. v. 11. [2] Gal. vi. 17.

kingdom."[1] And we have yet a third equivalent phrase in Chapter xix. of St. Matthew's Gospel, where our Lord speaks of those who inflict upon themselves certain privations "for the kingdom of heaven's sake."[2] Substituting here that latter phrase, we should have, "Blessed are they that are persecuted for the kingdom of heaven's sake," and why? "for" (they entitle themselves thus to the possession of it) "their's is the kingdom of heaven." And as to the equivalence of the two phrases "righteousness" and "the kingdom of heaven," compare the words in which St. Paul enumerates the constituents of God's kingdom; "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[3] But take which of the three phrases we prefer, it is the cause, our Lord teaches, and not merely the suffering, which makes the martyr;—"Blessed are they which are persecuted *for righteousness' sake.*"

But as we read this Beatitude, and reflect upon it, it cannot fail to strike us that the state of things which it contemplates has more or less passed away. Christianity having for centuries established itself, not indeed by any means over the whole world, but certainly in all the more leading and influential countries of it, persecution on account of a person's embracing the Christian faith has entirely collapsed; or, to speak more correctly, it has collapsed in its original form—it now works by other methods and proceeds from other quarters. And, first, it works *by other methods.* The Christian religion consists

[1] Psalm xlv. 6, as quoted in Heb. i. 8. [2] St. Matt. xix. 12.
[3] Rom. xiv. 17.

of doctrine and precept—the doctrine laying the foundation for the precept, the precept being built upon the doctrine as a superstructure upon its foundation. It is rather the precept of Christianity than its doctrine, which under the present circumstances of men in Christian countries elicits opposition and provokes hostility. The world will endure, nay, perhaps, will even commend the profession of an orthodox faith; but piety, if it goes beyond outward correctness of conduct and diligent attendance upon ordinances — if it becomes very pronounced, and takes the form of spirituality and heavenly-mindedness—is still as distasteful to the world as ever it was; and, although the law (at least in this country) shelters from any real harm or suffering all who act according to their religious convictions, it will attract to the true disciple some amount of ridicule, contempt, dislike, and reproach—in certain circles it may be something almost amounting to social excommunication. True it is that the utmost that can be done nowadays in the way of persecution, consistently with the law of civilised countries, is as nothing in comparison with that great trial of affliction, that "fiery trial,"[1] to which those who were immediately addressed by the Apostles, the primitive Christians, were subjected. But it should be remembered that there are *other quarters besides the world*, from which opposition to the kingdom of God and his righteousness may emanate; and that this opposition, whenever it entails pain or hardship of any kind upon those against whom it is directed, is virtually persecution, though it may not go under

[1] *See* 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.

that name. The flesh and the devil, no less than the world, are determined enemies of the true disciple, resolved, as far as in them lies, to thwart and harass him in his heavenward course ; and there is reason to think that, just in proportion to the comparative withdrawal of the world's opposition, will the hostility and resistance of these two other enemies be intensified. As it is with natural gifts and endowments, so it is with the trials and temptations to which God exposes men ; different men are tried in different forms, being compensated for severe trials in a certain form, by inaccessibility to trials of a different kind which their neighbours feel very keenly. A man persecuted as the early believers were, hunted sometimes from place to place, disinherited by his parents, disavowed by his family, cast off by his former employers, spoiled perhaps of all his goods,[1] without being able to procure any legal remedy, obliged to resort to dens and caves of the earth to meet his fellow-religionists and join with them in acts of worship, and then, in consequence of this secrecy, to which the intolerance of the world had driven him, charged with the most detestable crimes, and reviled as an enemy to society—such an one, under such circumstances, would be scarcely at all accessible to those temptations to softness, indolence, and luxury with which modern life and an overwrought civilisation has made us so familiar, nor would the specially Satanic temptations (insatiable vanity, overweening ambition, inordinate desire for supremacy at any cost) have any strong hold upon him. But upon the modern Christian, who is exempt

[1] *See* Heb. x. 34.

from persecution in the sense commonly attached to the word, they have a strong hold. And in firmly resisting these temptations of the flesh and the devil, and in yielding a life-long resistance to them, there may be in the eyes of God as much crucifixion of the natural instincts as in enduring a persecution, which indeed exposed the persecuted to the risk of martyrdom, but of martyrdom consummated in a very short time, and while indeed it alienated men from their families and homes, provided for them families and homes in the little community of true believers, cemented with them by that bond of spiritual relationship which is far more permanent than the natural.[1] But it certainly behoves us to lay to heart that the cheerful endurance of persecution *in one form or other* for righteousness' sake is one of the marks of God's children—that the law of Christian discipleship, and of what it may be expected to entail, is stated without any reserve or qualification: "Yea, and all that will live" (there is a force in the word "will" in the original; it does not represent the future of the verb "to live," but is a verb itself, "all that are minded to live,—have deliberately and of set purpose made up their minds to live") "godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."[2] If, then, we are not daily crucifying the instincts of the natural man, whether his higher or his lower instincts—if our life presents nothing of mortification, whether the mortification be of ambition, vanity, envy, anger, lust, or bodily appetite—so far it must be said of us, as it was said of Israel of old; "their spot *is* not *the spot* of God's children."[3]

[1] *See* St. Mark x. 29, 30. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 12. [3] *See* Deut. xxxii. 5.

And now what is the special blessing annexed to the being persecuted for righteousness' sake? It is the possession of the kingdom of heaven—"their's is the kingdom of heaven." It surprises us at first to observe that this is the very same blessing which is annexed to the first Beatitude—the possession of the kingdom of heaven. But a little consideration soon shows the reason why it should be so. The blessings are one and the same for this reason, that the characters on which they are pronounced are fundamentally one and the same, the only difference being that the later character is the development into full maturity of the earlier. Poverty of spirit is the seed out of which every other grace of the Christian character — mourning, meekness, longing after righteousness, mercifulness, purity, peacemaking — is developed, and gradually grows up, until virtue reaches its full blossom in the cheerful taking up of the cross of persecution, directed against the disciple by the world, the flesh, and the devil. He that knows himself to be "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (and to know this experimentally—to feel it—is to be "poor in spirit") has the whole spiritual mind in him in germ and embryo; in due time he will be drawn to Christ, to buy of Him the "gold" of precious faith, "tried in the fire" of adversity, the "white raiment" of imputed righteousness, the "eye-salve" of spiritual illumination.[1] And what is the endurance of persecution "for righteousness' sake," on which this blessing is pronounced, but the trial of faith in the furnace of adversity? And

[1] *See* Rev. iii. 17, 18.

accordingly, as the last virtue commended in the Beatitudes is only the first virtue brought to its full maturity, so the last blessing is nothing else than the first, only the first in its most intense, fullest, and most consolatory form. "Their's is the kingdom of heaven"—Christ has no blessing to bestow upon his people but this and what is wrapped up in this—the possession of the kingdom in all its power and privilege, in all its wondrous grace and blessedness, and ultimately in all its glory. Observe (for it is very noteworthy) that this first and last blessing is the only one of the series which runs in the present tense. "The mourners *shall be* comforted," "the meek *shall* inherit the earth," and so forth, but "the poor in spirit," and the "persecuted," have the kingdom as a present possession—"their's *is* the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven is that which was predicted in Nebuchadnezzar's dream as the kingdom which should be set up by "the God of heaven"[1] in the later and comparatively decrepit days of the Roman empire, that which both St. John the Baptist and our Lord spoke of as imminent and impending in their time ("Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"[2]), and which therefore long ago has been set up on the earth, and now counts among its subjects and possessors hundreds of thousands in every quarter of the globe to which the religion of Christ has penetrated. I say *its subjects and possessors.* Christ's people are the subjects of the kingdom, governed by its laws, held together by its ordinances, bearing true allegiance to its King; but it is true also that the subjects possess the king-

[1] *See* Daniel ii. 44. [2] *See* Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17.

dom, that the kingdom, in all that it has of grace, privilege, Providential guidance, strength, consolation, blessing, is "their's"—belongs to them of right, they having been made in their Baptism "inheritors" (not *heirs*, but *inheritors*, *i.e.* heirs who have entered upon the inheritance) "of the kingdom of heaven." And those who have realised their Baptism, by fulfilling the conditions of repentance and faith on which it was granted, know experimentally the blessings and consolations of the kingdom, of which blessings and consolations St. Paul gives a summary, when he says, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (stands not in anything outward), "but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[1] The Divine Master Himself had already in the Beatitudes summarised the blessings and consolations of the kingdom of heaven, which constitute its essence, rather more at large than St. Paul, yet in entire coincidence with him. For, according to Christ, the kingdom of heaven embraces not consolation only, but also inheritance (in a true and spiritual sense) of the earth, and moreover satisfaction with righteousness, experience of mercy, glimpses of God, which hereafter shall become the clear vision of Him, recognition as his children. All these are wrapped up in the possession of the kingdom of heaven, just as the white sunlight contains in itself all the prismatic colours, and is shown to do so when its ray is analysed by being refracted in the prism or the rainbow. And as the kingdom of heaven is the present possession of its subjects, and not merely their hope in the future, we infer with certainty that

[1] Rom. xiv. 17.

the "shall be" of the six other blessings is not to be understood so to limit the enjoyment of the blessings to a future state, that no foretaste or experience of them is to be looked for here. The kingdom of heaven embraces them all; and the kingdom of heaven is an inheritance on which the Christian has already entered. But of course the full maturity of these blessings, like the final manifestation of the kingdom, is reserved for the Christian's hereafter; and, even in respect of his hereafter, the realisation of the blessings, and the manifestation of the kingdom, will be by different stages—in Paradise first; then possibly in the millennial condition on a glorified earth; then, finally, in the perfect beatification of heaven, when the Son, having had all his enemies put under his feet, shall also Himself "be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."[1] Meanwhile we must pray daily, as instructed by the Divine Master, "Thy kingdom come"[2]—come in its most brilliant manifestation and in its fullest development, come in the glory which shall consummate and supersede grace—yet not forgetting, while we so pray, that the kingdom is a Jacob's ladder, which is set up on the earth, while its top reaches to heaven,[3] and expecting therefore to receive, even while in the body, in answer to the prayers and praises which angels bear upwards, those Divine communications of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which they bear downwards, and which, so far as they are realised in our experience, turn earth into a heaven.

[1] *See* 1 Cor. xv. 28. [2] St. Matt. vi. 10; St. Luke xi. 2.
[3] *See* Gen. xxviii. 12.

SUPPLEMENT TO PART II

EXCURSUS ON 2 PET. I. 5, 6, 7, AND GAL. V. 22, 23

IN tracing the features of the mind of Christ, as delineated for us by Himself in the Beatitudes, we have frequently glanced at the delineations of the same mind, as sketched from a somewhat different point of view by the two great Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul. While the author would not willingly divert the mind of the reader from the Divine Master's own exhibition of the virtues of the Christian character, he thinks it may be interesting and instructive to complete the harmonizing of the Beatitudes, which has already been begun, with the inspired utterances of the two Apostles on the same subject. Hence this Chapter, which is supplementary to the main argument of the work.

I. And first as to the catalogue of graces which St. Peter exhorts those, who had "obtained like precious faith with" himself, to "add to" their "faith" (2 Pet. i. 1, 5 *et seq.*)

The principle upon which the Beatitudes are arranged has already been indicated. They exhibit to us the mind of Christ, according to what may be called its historical development. The first grace is poverty of spirit, because Christ's "emptying Him-

self, to take the form of a servant, and to be made in the likeness of men,"[1] was the first step in his career of virtue. And the last grace is persecution for righteousness' sake, because Christ's "becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," was the crown and climax of the virtue, which in his human nature He exhibited. The intervening six graces were developed at the different stages of his earthly career, now one, now another, as the occasion called them forth.

The principle upon which St. Peter arranges the Christian virtues is that of proceeding from the fundamental virtue, which lies at the root of all the others, and which seminally contains them in itself, to the crowning virtue of love or charity, which is the full blossom of the Christian character. (See where faith is implied in the Beatitudes, Part II. chapter ii. pp. 114, 115.) Assuming that those to whom he writes have the fundamental virtue of faith, that they have believed God's "exceeding great and precious promises" in Christ (*v.* 4), he bids them furnish or supply this faith with all the other virtues, just as the five wise virgins furnished themselves with "oil in their vessels," wherewith to feed the flame of their lamps from time to time.[2] Observe the implication of this precept, "Add to your faith virtue," etc. It is quite true that faith, if genuine, contains in itself the germ of all the other virtues, and will in due course unfold itself into them, if its growth be not retarded or thrown back. But the Apostle does not

[1] *See* Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8, where the Revised Version has substituted the more literal rendering "emptied himself" for the "made himself of no reputation" of the Authorised.

[2] *See* St. Matt. xxv. 4, 7.

allow them to rely on the seminal power of faith, without a distinct and separate effort to cultivate the other graces. He does not lead them to think that, if they had real faith, it was all they need care for; every other virtue would come of itself. On the other hand, he indicates that there must be an effort made by the will to cultivate each virtue separately. He is not so much thinking of faith as seminal, which it really is. Rather he regards it as a foundation, needing to have all the other virtues built up on it by a process of spiritual architecture.

We have already seen that "the giving all diligence" in this work of engrafting (*v.* 5) implies the hunger and thirst after righteousness, which is the subject of the fourth Beatitude. (See Part II. chap. v. pp. 156, 157.)

"Add to your faith virtue." The word translated "virtue," which is of rarest occurrence in the New Testament,[1] means probably moral excellence—

[1] The word is found again in ver. 3 of this chapter, where it denotes that moral excellence of the Divine Character (being in fact love), which moves God to address to men "the heavenly calling" ("through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and *virtue*." So the Revisers of 1880, who evidently adopt the reading *ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ*), and once more in St. Peter's First Epistle (ii. 9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye may show forth *the excellencies* of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." So the Revised Version, more literally than the Authorised, the original being *ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε*). The "excellencies" of God are his excellent attributes, moral and natural, more especially the former. It is interesting to observe how in both these passages the excellence of God is connected with his calling sinners into his kingdom, their calling having its source in the excellence of the Divine character. In view of the employment of the word in both these instances (1 Pet. ii. 9, and 2 Pet. i. 3) to denote those glorious attributes of God in which salvation takes its rise, Beza's observation, quoted by Archbishop Trench, that the word is too humble a one to designate the graces of the Holy Spirit, seems to require a little modification: though it is true, no doubt, that the Sacred Writers of the New Testament, feeling that there was a heathen ring about it, were shy of applying it to *human* virtue. (*See* Trench on the *Synonyms of*

such excellence as men could and did appreciate without Revelation. The precept may be thus expressed in a large paraphrase ; "Let it be said of you believers in Christ 'by those without,' across whom you are thrown, that you are virtuous men, upright, true, honourable, reliable in all the relations of life." Virtue finds no place among the Beatitudes, which are occupied throughout with spiritual, as distinct from moral graces of character.[1]

"And to virtue knowledge." (*τὴν γνῶσιν.*) In the three catalogues, which we are now examining and comparing, this is the single instance of a virtue which has to do with the mind—an intellectual virtue. From its being a single instance we learn a lesson. While the knowledge of spiritual things (of which alone there can be mention here) is to be sought, and while Christians are commended for being "filled with all knowledge" (Rom. xv. 14), and God is thanked for enriching them "with all knowledge" (1 Cor. i. 4, 5), knowledge has snares incidental to it ; it "puffeth up"

the New Testament, under *προφητεύω, μαντεύομαι*—Cambridge, 1854, p. 23.) It is however so applied twice, once in St. Peter's ladder of graces, where it appears as the first grace which is to be grafted on to the stock of faith, and again in the remarkably similar exhortation of St. Paul to the Philippians (Phil. iv. 8) to cultivate whatsoever things are true, honourable (*σεμνὰ*), just, pure (*ἁγνὰ*), lovely (*προσφιλῆ*), of good report—"if there be any *virtue*, and if there be any praise," to "think on these things." The whole tenor of the exhortation is that the Philippians should set such an example as the heathen society around them could understand and appreciate by the teaching of conscience and the moral sense.

The above are the only passages of the New Testament in which the word occurs.

[1] As to the origination of the moral graces of character, no less than of the spiritual, by the working of the Spirit of God, see what is said lower down in this Chapter on the moral virtue of "fidelity" (or faith) in St. Paul's catalogue of Christian graces (pp. 223, 4, 5).

(1 Cor. viii. 1); a man may understand "all knowledge," and yet be nothing, if he have not love (1 Cor. xiii. 2); it is partial at best, and in the higher state of existence, when we are perfected, it "shall vanish away" (I Cor. xiii. 8, 9, 10). But, on the other hand, "the word of knowledge" is a gift of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4, 8); woe is denounced against the teachers of the Law for "taking away the key of knowledge" (St. Luke xi. 52)—that true interpretation of the Law, as finding its fulfilment in Christ, which gave admission to "the kingdom of heaven" (cp. St. Matt. xxiii. 13); and in this very Epistle St. Peter bids those to whom he is writing to "grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," as well as "in grace" (2 Pet. iii. 18). And St. Paul prays for his Colossian converts that they may "increase in the knowledge of God" (Col. i. 10). For ourselves, who do not live under the ministry of inspired men, the great means of growing in the knowledge of the Personal Word is the thoughtful study of the written Word, under the teaching of God's Spirit. See what is said under the fourth Beatitude as to "hungering and thirsting after" the means of "righteousness," and specially as to "desiring the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby" (1 Pet. ii. 2), Part II. chap. v. pp. 150-152.

"And to knowledge temperance." Temperance is included also in St. Paul's catalogue of the virtues which are "the fruit of the Spirit." The cultivation of it will fall under the last Beatitude—that pronounced upon the being persecuted for righteousness' sake. (*See* Part II. chap. ix. pp. 209, 210.) But self-control, and especially control over the lower

appetites, will fall also under the initial counsel to take Christ's yoke upon us. (*See* Part I. chap. ii. pp. 78, 79.)

"And to temperance patience." Patience is only one of the forms of "meekness," which is the subject of the third Beatitude (*see* Part II. chap. iv. p. 134). Meekness makes us patient towards trying persons, and under trying circumstances.[1]

"And to patience godliness." Godliness (εὐσέβεια) will connect itself with the blessing upon the "pure in heart." Those whose conscience is void of offence, who love God purely and all other persons or things in Him and for Him, and who sincerely seek his glory in all they do, are godly (see Part II. chap. vii. pp. 174-179).

"And to godliness brotherly-kindness." The peacemakers will promote brotherly-kindness in their circle. And thus brotherly-kindness will find its place under the seventh Beatitude (see Part II. chap. viii.) The connexion between peacemaking and brotherly-kindness is shown in the remonstrance addressed by Moses to the Israelites, who strove with one another, when he tried to "set them at one again"; "Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?" (Acts vii. 26). The peacemaker appeals to the brotherly relation subsisting between the parties, and thus strives to bring them to brotherly-kindness. Peacemaking is in order to

[1] Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament* (§ liii. *s.v.*, μακροθυμία, ὑπομονὴ, ἀνοχή), draws this distinction between long-suffering and patience, that the first expresses patience in respect of persons, the second patience in respect of things. The grace of meekness embraces both long-suffering and patience; "*Be long-suffering toward all*" (μακροθυμεῖτε πρὸς πάντας), 1 Thess. v. 14, R.V.; and "Patient in tribulation" (Τῇ θλίψει ὑπομένοντες), Rom. xii. 12.

brotherly-kindness; seeks that as its result. On the other hand, a sentiment of brotherly-kindness disposes and leads to peacemaking.

"And to brotherly-kindness charity." Charity is the topmost step of this ladder of graces, which may be compared to Jacob's ladder, above which the Lord stood, who is love or charity (*see* Gen. xxviii. 12, 13; 1 John iv. 8, 16). The love of God will fall under purity of heart (*see* Part II. chap. vii. pp. 176, 177). The love of our neighbour under "mercifulness" (*see* Part II. chap. vi. pp. 163-166), and under "peacemaking" (Part II. chap. viii. pp. 188-192).

GAL. v. 22, 23.

The virtues in St. Peter's catalogue are eight, like the Beatitudes. The graces enumerated by St. Paul as "the fruit of the Spirit" are nine; but, by considering long-suffering and meekness (which are very nearly allied) as a single grace, we may reduce these also to eight.[1]

Let it be observed that the Apostle uses the singular form of the word "fruit," not the plural, with which the suffrage of our Litany has made us so familiar ("That it may please thee to give to all thy people increase of grace to hear meekly thy Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the *fruits* of the Spirit"). He would preserve in the minds of his readers the idea of the unity of these

[1] We may note that the Beatitudes themselves would be nine in number, if the eleventh and twelfth verses (which are in fact only an enlargement of the last Beatitude) were embraced in them; "Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

graces, flowing from the fact that each one of them is the result of the operation of one and the same Spirit. In speaking of spiritual *gifts*, he had emphasized strongly the unity of the Spirit, to whose operation the diverse gifts were due (here again nine in number—the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues [1]); "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."[2] And the gifts were "the *manifestation*" (not *manifestations*) "of the Spirit, given to every man to profit withal."[3] So here, by way of maintaining the same idea, the graces of the Spirit are not *fruits*, but *fruit*. St. Stephen's bravery and heavenly-mindedness, St. Peter's zeal and constancy, St. Paul's unwearied activity, St. John's devout contemplativeness, were fundamentally the manifestation of one and the same Spirit, operating diversely under the conditions imposed upon Him by the diversities of natural character.

Let it be observed also that, whereas St. Peter represents the strenuous endeavour which the human will must make, in adorning our profession of the faith of Christ with the various Christian virtues, St. Paul looks at the other side of the truth,—the entire dependence of these virtues, both in their origin and in every stage of their subsequent development, upon the secret and invisible operation of God's grace in the depth of the heart. Fruit is put forth by the hidden and underground processes of Nature; man contributes nothing to it; "the seed springs and

[1] Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10. [2] *Ibid.* xii. 4. [3] *Ibid.* xii. 7.

grows up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (St. Mark iv. 27, 28). How appropriate is it that the Apostle, whose province it was to set forth fully and freely the grace of God, should look at the subject under this aspect of it!

As for the order in which the several graces are arranged by St. Paul, it is the reverse of that in which St. Peter has exhibited them. Love is placed first, as containing in itself every other grace, as being the summary of the Evangelical Law, as indeed it was of the Law of the old Dispensation. Love opens out into "joy and peace" towards God; into "long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (fidelity), meekness" towards our neighbour; while, in its attitude towards ourselves, love takes the form of temperance or self-control.

We have already shown the place which "love" (or charity) holds among the Beatitudes, in speaking of St. Peter's catalogue of virtues (p. 219).

"Joy" and "peace" fall under the "consolation" of the second Beatitude (*see* Part II. chap. iii. pp. 129-131).

The third Beatitude is pronounced upon the meek. And we find among "the fruit of the Spirit" "meekness" under that name. "Long-suffering" is nearly allied to "meekness," being indeed nothing else than meekness in its patient endurance of injuries and thwartings from men. See what is said above on "patience" in St. Peter's catalogue (p. 218 and *n.* 1).

The word rendered "gentleness" (χρηστότης) should rather be "kindness" or "goodness." It is

rendered "kindness" in Tit. iii. 4 ("the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man"), and in Eph. ii. 7 ("*his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus"); "goodness" in Rom. ii. 4 ("despisest thou the riches of his goodness?"); and again, xi. 22 ("the goodness and severity"—*ἀποτομία*—"of God"). From this last passage we learn that the virtue indicated by this word is the opposite of severity or rigour—something tantamount to *indulgence*.

The word next to it in St. Paul's catalogue (*ἀγαθωσύνη*), which is translated "goodness" in our Authorised Version, means much the same. St. Jerome, in his *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, as quoted by Archbishop Trench in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, (§ lxiii. *s.v. ἀγαθωσύνη, χρηστότης*), draws the distinction between the two words thus. Goodness (the last in order of the two in St. Paul's catalogue) may dispose us to benefit others, and to grant what they sue for, but in a sterner and more severe manner. *Χρηστότης*, on the other hand, is more genial, invites to familiarity, is affable, sweet, attractive in its manners.[1] *Ἀγαθωσύνη*, the sterner word, is only once applied to *God's* goodness in the New Testament (2 Thess. i. 11); while, as we have seen, the word denoting the more gracious species of goodness (*χρηστότης*) is *four times* ascribed to God as a Divine attribute. Both "kindness" and "goodness" will find their place under the peacemaker's blessing (see Part II.

[1] Archbishop Trench thinks that Christ displayed "goodness" (*ἀγαθωσύνη*) by driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and even by uttering the woes against the Scribes and Pharisees, but "kindness" (*χρηστότης*) by his reception of the penitent woman in St. Luke vii. 37-50.

Chap. viii. pp. 193, 194). Kindness more particularly disposes a man to "seek peace and ensue it" (Psalm xxxiv. 14; 1 Peter iii. 11).

"Faith." It is clear from the collocation of this word that the faith indicated is not the fundamental grace of the Gospel, the faith by which we are justified and sanctified, but some virtue exercised towards men. The Revisers of 1880 have rendered it "faithfulness;" and probably no better word could have been found to express the meaning. A faithful man is a man of integrity and honour, one who is as good as his word, who conscientiously keeps his engagements, whom those who know him know they can rely upon. It is *probable* that the word here rendered "faith" (πίστις) is used in this sense in 1 Tim. vi. 11 ("follow after righteousness, godliness, *faith*, love, patience, meekness"[1]), *certain* that it is so used in Tit. ii. 9, 10 (where it is rendered "fidelity"); "*Exhort* servants to be obedient unto their own masters . . . not purloining, but shewing all good *fidelity;* that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Trustworthiness is the great merit of a servant; and among heathen slaves it was very rarely found, the slave population as a rule being inveterately addicted to lying and stealing. When the Christian slave showed honesty and truthfulness in all his dealings, he would "adorn the doctrine" in the eyes of his heathen master. But this sense of the word must be admitted to be rare in the New Testament, the higher and nobler actings of faith, as the conductor to fetch down God's power into the

[1] Compare 1 Tim. iv. 12, 2 Tim. ii. 22, which also *may be* instances.

soul, filling the whole field of view when the word presented itself to the mind of inspired men. The "fidelity" here mentioned by St. Paul will fall under the "virtue" of St. Peter's catalogue, as being a moral rather than a spiritual grace. But it may be asked, if this be so, how is this "fidelity" described as being part of "the fruit of the Spirit?" I presume that we are not so to restrict the Spirit to his Pentecostal outpouring, as to refuse to acknowledge his working among men before that outpouring was vouchsafed, and independently of it. A revelation by means of the works of God, though not by means of his Word, was made to all mankind (*see* Rom. i. 19, 20; Psalm xix. 1, 2, 3, 4); and there can be no doubt that correspondently with this revelation, a lower measure of Divine grace was granted to the Gentiles, enabling them, not only to recognise moral duty, but to a certain extent to fulfil it, as St. Paul implies that some of them did, when he says; "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." (Rom. ii. 14). The virtue, then, of such Gentiles as did live virtuously, we need not hesitate to ascribe to the working of God's Spirit in their hearts, and to recognise it as part of "the fruit of the Spirit." As regards our Thirteenth Article (*of Works before Justification*), the true way of reconciling it with the distinctly declared acceptability to God of the works of Cornelius (Acts x. 4, 31, 35) is to recognise these last as *not* "done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit." Are there, then, any good works done by the heathen, which *are* done

"before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his Spirit?" I suppose that all good works are so done, when the moral sense has no part in producing them, when they are done simply from natural impulse, and not because the thing is right in itself, nor because the man looks forward to a judgment to come, in which right and wrong doing will respectively receive their deserts; as where a benevolent sensualist relieves distress simply to gratify the feeling of compassion. If it were from the love of virtue that he relieved distress, that principle would lead him to exercise self-control as to his appetites, and thus to be no longer a sensualist.

See above also, in St. Peter's catalogue, under what head in the Beatitudes "temperance" will fall (pp. 217, 218).

I must not conclude this consideration of "the fruit of the Spirit," as described in Gal. v., without calling the reader's attention to the parallel catalogue of Christian graces in Col. iii. 12, 13, 14, 15 (ten in number), which are thus given in our Authorised Version; "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, (1) bowels of mercies, (2) kindness (*χρηστότητα*), (3) humbleness of mind (*ταπεινοφροσύνην*), (4) meekness, (5) longsuffering (*μακροθυμίαν*); (6) forbearing one another (*ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων*), and (7) forgiving one another (*χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς*)" ["each other," R.V.], "if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. And above all these things *put on* (8) charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let (9) the peace of God rule in

your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and (10) be ye thankful."

(1) The "bowels of mercies" ("a heart of compassion," R.V.) correspond with the fifth Beatitude, "Blessed *are* the merciful."

(2) "Kindness" (χρηστότης), (4) meekness (πραότης), (5) longsuffering, and (8) charity (or love, ἀγάπη), appear in the catalogue to the Galatians. [See the remarks on them above.]

(3) "Humbleness of mind" is the subject of the first Beatitude, "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit," and is embraced also under the third, "Blessed *are* the meek."

(6) "Forbearing one another"[1] will correspond with the "meekness" of the third Beatitude. [See what is said above on the grace of "patience" in St. Peter's catalogue, p. 218 and *n.* 1.]

(7) Those who "forgive each other" will inherit the blessing not only of "the meek" (third Beatitude), but also of "the merciful" (fifth Beatitude), and of "the peacemakers" (seventh Beatitude).

(9) "The peace of God" (or, according to the reading preferred by the Revisers, "of Christ") corresponds to the "peace" which is the third grace in the catalogue to the Galatians. So far as the attainment of it is in our own power, "the meek"

[1] "Forbearance" (ἀνοχή), as contrasted with longsuffering (μακροθυμία), is thought by Archbishop Trench to indicate rather temporary connivance at a fault than permanent bearing with it. "It is therefore most fitly used at Rom. iii. 26 ('through the forbearance of God') in relation to the πάρεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων ('the passing over of the sins done aforetime,' R.V.), which found place before the atoning death of Christ, as contrasted with the ἄφεσις ἁμαρτίων, which was the result of that death." [*Synonyms of the New Testament*, § liii. *s.v.* μακροθυμία, ὑπομονή, ἀνοχή.]

(third Beatitude), and "the peacemakers" (seventh Beatitude) cultivate it; while so far as it is a blessing coming to us from without, it falls under the "consolation" of the second Beatitude. The office which it is to fulfil in the heart is very expressively denoted by the word βραζενέτω ("let it rule," literally, Let it settle everything like an umpire, composing all differences, and putting the heart into an orderly and peaceful state).

(10) "And be ye thankful." The grace of thankfulness is involved in the consolation of the second Beatitude, in the inheritance of the earth of the third, in the satisfaction of the fourth, and indeed in the blessing annexed to every Beatitude; for the experience of each of these blessings cannot fail to cause thankfulness unto God. But it may be regarded as expressly prescribed, and prescribed under the most trying circumstances, by our Lord's expansion of the eighth Beatitude; "Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*. . . . Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven." The "rejoicing" will necessarily involve thankfulness, as its expression towards God. David's dancing before the ark was an expression of thankfulness, no less than of joy. "*It was* before the LORD," he says to Michal, "who chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD" (2 Sam. vi. 14, 15, 21).

It may be asked, where, in these catalogues of Christian virtues, given by inspired Apostles, repent-

ance appears? where is the grace of mourning, the grace of the second Beatitude, as a sinner must exhibit it? It must ever be remembered that the point of the Dispensation, at which the Apostles stood when they wrote these catalogues, was that at which the Holy Spirit had been given in all his fulness both of grace and gift. Repentance is John the Baptist's grace—a grace introductory to the kingdom of heaven. The Apostles, living and writing at a time when the kingdom of heaven was fully set upon the earth, and when the Church might be supposed to have left the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to be going on unto perfection (see Heb. vi. 1), could hardly be expected to mention repentance among Christian graces; it was assumed that those to whom they wrote *had* repented, and (as it were) had left repentance in the background. But lest it should be inferred that Christians, after their first repentance and conversion, would have no more need of repentance, and that the leading of a high and spiritual life by all members of the Church would be so prevalent as to leave no room for it, this great grace has a grand paragraph all to itself in 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10, 11, where its source and its characteristic features (seven in number) are minutely described. We are there taught that it is a blessed change of mind, taking its rise in, and operated by, godly sorrow (sorrow of a godly character, because the sin has brought the soul into danger, incurred the sentence of the heavenly Judge, wounded the heavenly Father's love, necessitated the Divine Saviour's sufferings, done despite to the Spirit of grace), and that its features are (1) earnest care to avoid sin for the future; (2) earnest

desire to clear one's self of it before the judgment seat of Christ; (3) indignation against self for having offended so loving a God; (4) a holy fear of his judgment; (5) a longing to be reconciled to Him; (6) zeal in approving to Him the sincerity of our repentance; and (7) an execution of righteous vengeance upon the lusts which have led us astray. O Lord, let this mind of repentance never for a single day be absent from us! Let it act as a stimulus to us in cultivating all the other graces of the Christian character!

PART III

THE COUNSEL FOR THE CONFLICT

CHAPTER I

WATCH AND PRAY

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.—
St. Matt. xxvi. 41.

It is the property of a great artist to be expressive in his slightest touches. A single line traced by his pencil represents an horizon of sea, and the smallest of loops inclining to it a sail scudding across it; while in portraying that most expressive of all objects, the human face, the least curve will indicate the predominant character, grave or gay. And, indeed, one who is master of any subject can show his mastery by comprehending the whole subject, or at least a considerable section of it, in a very few words of deep significance. It is so here. We have in the words, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," a counsel for the whole of the spiritual life by One, who was Himself an absolutely perfect Master of it, having lived it in the flesh (which He condescended to take into union with his Godhead), without flaw, or failure, or shortcoming, or taint of sin, for thirty-three years. For our Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity, but also a spiritual man, who was made

"perfect through sufferings"[1]—perfect through the entire acquiescence of the lower will in man, which naturally and innocently shrinks from suffering, in that will of the Father, which prescribed it for Him as the necessary and indispensable condition of human salvation.[2]—I say that in these words we have a counsel for the whole of the spiritual life. And so it is indeed. For our Lord here indicates to us the method of not entering into temptation. We are to watch and pray; and so we shall not enter into it. Now what is life, in its every stage from beginning to end, but an ever-shifting scene of temptation—temptation varying with our age, our character, the circumstances into which we are thrown? What is life but a divinely constituted arena of trial? What is God's design in prolonging the life of an infant after its Baptism, of an adult after he has seriously turned to God with all his heart, and has embraced by faith the salvation which is freely offered to him through the blood and grace of Jesus? As regards the individual himself, the design is simply and exclusively probation. "The LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, . . . to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart."[3] And the proving of the soul is by temptation—by the trials which are allowed to assail it in the arena of life, and which we are told in our Catechism arise from three sources, the influence and example of evil men ("the world"), the natural depravity of our own hearts, entailed upon us by the fall of our first parents ("the flesh"), and the power of Satan and his angels, to whom is left open

[1] *See* Heb. ii. 10. [2] *See* St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. [3] Deut. viii. 2.

an avenue by which they can approach the human mind, and seek to draw it away from God ("the devil"). And in what does *the spiritual* life consist but in that combined watchfulness and prayer, which shall fortify us against these temptations, and prevent our entering into them? But how is it possible not to enter into temptation if, in virtue of our being in the world, we are momentarily surrounded by temptations? To enter into temptation is a widely different thing from being exposed to it; it is a widely different thing from feeling it and experiencing its power. We enter into temptations, and can only enter into them, by the will; by assent to them, by allowing their influence, and yielding to their sway. For, in a moral and spiritual point of view, the will or determining faculty, not the mind or reflective faculty, not the impressional and emotional part of our nature, not even the moral sense, which simply discriminates without determining—not any of these, but the will is the man. And if the will does not capitulate, but maintains its attitude of resistance to evil, the fortress of the soul is not carried, however closely beleaguered or violently assaulted it may be.

But we shall fail to appreciate the extraordinary preciousness and beauty of this counsel, unless we regard it as tinged with the colours of our dear Lord's experience, and as indicating the sore struggle which He was Himself going through at the time He gave it. This struggle was none other than the Agony—a struggle so severe that it wrung the bloody sweat from his sacred frame,[1] and demanded for his support under it the appearance of a special

[1] *See* St. Luke xxii. 44.

messenger from heaven.[1] It was after the first "strong cry" of the Agony, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,"[2] that He rose up, not only craving for human sympathy Himself, but also in the exercise of sympathy, bent upon instructing and strengthening his disciples, and approached the chosen three, to see whether they were heeding his precept to watch with Him. The counsel to "watch and pray" had its immediate origin in the circumstance that, so far from watching, He found them "sleeping for sorrow."[3] While we may not presume to understand or explain the pressure laid upon his human spirit by the Agony, which at a very early period of her devotions the Church designated as "unknown" (thus showing her sense of its profound mysteriousness), we may yet see what the temptation was, to which in that hour by the united force of watchfulness and prayer He rose superior. "Father, if it be possible," He cries, "let this cup pass from me." The cup was the cup of suffering and death, which to the susceptibility of his spotless innocence was horrible and loathsome to an extent which we, who in virtue of the corruption of our nature have sympathies with sin, cannot in the remotest degree conceive; and when He asks to be excused drinking this cup, if it were possible, his meaning undoubtedly is—not if it were abstractedly possible, but possible consistently with that great purpose of human salvation, which He came into the world to work out. The temptation then was to spare Himself, to abandon the great

[1] *See* St. Luke xxii. 43. [2] St. Matt. xxvi. 39.
[3] *See Ibid.* verses 40, 41, with St. Luke xxii. 45.

object of his mission, if it could not be achieved at a less cost than the Agony and Bloody Sweat, the Cross and Passion, the precious Death and Burial—a temptation which had presented itself to Him before, when, upon his predicting his suffering and death, Simon Peter had said, thinking to speak soothingly, but in truth making himself the tempter's mouthpiece; "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," and had received the stern and crushing reproof, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."[1] The temptation is now renewed with greater force than ever, he himself wielding it in his own person, who on that previous occasion had employed an Apostle as his mouthpiece. "The prince of this world cometh,"[2] our Lord had said in reference to, and in the foresight of, this very assault; but lest his disciples should suppose that his being thus sorely tempted argued in Him sinfulness of nature, such as they themselves had inherited, He adds, "and hath nothing in me"—finds in me, that is, no wrong bias, no corrupt tendency, but only that natural shrinking from suffering which is incidental to humanity, and a part of the infirmity of the creature as it came from the Creator's hand. And let us note that this very sinlessness of our Divine Master made the trial all the more crushing and severe; for, as I have implied above, the full appreciation of the horror of death as the ordained penalty of sin is not appreciable by the sinner himself. Persons acclimatised to sin, as we all are, from their youth upwards, have lost

[1] St. Matt. xvi. 22, 23. [2] St. John xiv. 30.

their sense of its awfulness, and of the utter ruin which it brings in its train, even as the eye of a captive born and bred in a dungeon into which only a ray of light struggles, soon accommodates itself to the surrounding darkness, and begins to discern forms in it. But what shall we say of the exquisite unselfishness of Him who, in the course of bearing the heavy burden of a world's sin, turns aside for one moment to say a word of counsel to fainting and failing disciples, and to bring from the treasury of his bitter and unparalleled experience a lesson far-reaching and of deepest significance, which might lift them over their comparatively light temptations? We naturally make excuses for those who are the victims of a crushing sorrow, if they are somewhat wrapped in themselves, and have no time and thought to give to the trials of others. But here is One from whom the pressure of a mountain of woe, the penalty of the world's sin, only elicits considerateness for others, sympathy with others, and the effort to guide and help them in their lesser sorrows. We must say that this extraordinary unselfishness is only another proof of the absolute sinlessness of the soul exhibiting it; for by an invariable moral law sin hardens the heart and deadens its sensibilities, and thus perfect purity becomes a condition of perfect sympathy. And we must say also that the circumstance of this counsel's coming to us steeped in the colours of our Lord's sympathy—a sympathy excited by his own experience of sore temptation—ought to endear it to us as our most precious treasure, and to make us lay it up in our heart of hearts, as the motto and ruling maxim of our whole spiritual life.

"Watch." The full force, which this short precept should have in our minds, will not be given to it, unless we observe how the duty of watchfulness is inculcated not only here, but forms the most striking feature of Christ's teaching, as his career drew towards its close. His parting prophecy on the mount has this duty for its practical key-note. He is the man about to take a far journey, who leaves his house and gives authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commands the porter to watch;[1] and again He is the bridegroom who comes to fetch home the bride, while her whole escort of virgins slumber and sleep—comes so suddenly and unexpectedly that his procession has passed into the chamber where the marriage supper is to be held, before the foolish virgins can provide themselves with a supply of oil.[2] By the tone of the whole discourse, and more especially by those two parables, He had prepared the minds of his disciples for this most solemn final inculcation of the great duty. And how deeply his words sunk into the heart of that one among them, whose drowsiness (after he had made so boastful a profession of warm attachment) had drawn them forth, and to whom they were in the first instance addressed, may be seen by his reproduction of this holy counsel in two places of his First Epistle, "The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer";[3] and again, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."[4] Observe particularly this latter passage,

[1] *See* St. Mark xiii. 33 to end. [2] *See* St. Matt. xxv. 1 to 13.
[3] 1 Pet. iv. 7. [4] *Ibid.* v. 8.

because in it the vigilance (or watchfulness) which is pressed upon Christians is said to be against those crafts and assaults of the devil, to which our Lord Himself was exposed in the garden of the Agony. In the parting prophecy, on the other hand, as also in the earlier passage of St. Peter's First Epistle, the Church is incited to watchfulness, not so much by the thought of the machinations of the evil one, as by the urgency and imminence (so it is spoken of) of the Second Advent. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."[1] "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."[2]

But the watching *for* the Advent and the watching *against* surrounding evil are, after all, only two aspects of one and the same duty, a presentation of the same great obligation under different points of view; and it is natural and to be expected that the Church, having learned by the experience of centuries that the Second Advent and "end of all things" are not in point of time so imminent as the primitive believers probably took them to be, should direct her attention in these latter days more to that surrounding evil of which, in the Providential development of events, she has had increasing experience, than to that impending glory and blessedness at the return of the heavenly Bridegroom, which yet she cherishes fondly in her heart as her hope of hopes.

Viewed in this aspect of it, the precept to watch harmonizes with the New Testament figure of the spiritual life as a conflict or battle. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,

[1] St. Matt. xxiv. 42. [2] St. Matt xxv. 6.

against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*." By the words "we wrestle not against flesh and blood,"[1] the Apostle certainly does not intend to assert (how could he, in days when persecution was directed against believers?) that no opposition is offered to us in our heavenward course by men, or by our corrupt nature (which would be in direct contradiction to many other New Testament passages). But he would give the Ephesian Christians to understand that the opposition of the world and the flesh is so entirely instigated, set on work, fomented, maintained by the devil and his angels behind the scenes, that the thought of those who really wield the antagonism swallows up the thought of the instrumentalities and agencies which they employ, even as in the case of one man's slaying another with a sword it would be perfectly true to say, "It was all the murderer's doing," and the saying so would not imply that no deadly weapon was used by the murderer. Evil men and man's corrupt heart are to be regarded as the instrumentality, which the devil and his angels employ.—Another very significant point in these great words of the Apostle challenges some notice and explanation. He speaks of the Christian conflict as a wrestling match. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." But in prosecuting the figure he drops the image of a wrestling match, and substitutes that of a battle. For he speaks of armour, defensive and offensive, with which the conflict is to be carried on—"the whole armour of God," the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the

[1] Eph. vi. 12.

sword of the Spirit[1]—and it is the soldier, not the wrestler, who uses armour, and does not venture to go forth into the fray until he has accoutred himself with it. Yet doubtless there is a meaning, and a profound one, in the use of the word "wrestle," where "fight" would have harmonized better with the rest of the imagery. Men go into battle in masses, and direct their arrows or bullets, not against individuals, but against the serried ranks of the enemy; sometimes, but not often, there will occur a single combat of soldier with soldier. But wrestling is *always* a single combat, in which the thews and sinews of each combatant are taxed to the utmost to throw the other. The Holy Ghost, then, by calling the spiritual conflict rather a wrestling-match than a battle, would doubtless impress upon us the personal individual character of the Christian warfare. Christ's faithful soldier and servant must meet the enemies of his salvation single-handed, with no other help than the Captain of his salvation is always prompt and willing to give. He cannot be allowed to decline a personal conflict; as the great salvation was wrought out for each individual ("that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man"[2]), so the struggle to avail one's self of it must be an individual struggle; the merely being in the ranks of the Church, and arrayed under her banner, will not secure the end in view. But considering the conflict under the other image of a battle, or rather a prolonged and sustained warfare, the absolute necessity of watchfulness to success comes instantly into view. The vigilance of the sentinel, the observations of the scout, are as much

[1] Eph. vi. 11, 13 to 18. [2] Heb. ii. 9.

required for a successful campaign as the prowess of the fighting men. If the watchfulness of the outposts of a camp is relaxed, the camp falls an easy pray to the spoiler.

"Watch *and pray*." Only one side of the Saviour's counsel as to the conduct of the Christian warfare is wrapped up in the word "watch." Prayer is as essential as watchfulness to the achievement of victory; and if one half of Christian duty be represented by "watch," an equally important and comprehensive half is represented by "pray." "Except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain."[1] The watchman, doubtless, must wake, if the city is to be secure; for in the usual order of things it is through the watchman's vigilance, as the means, that the Lord exercises his divine guardianship; but the means, without God's blessing upon them, or rather say God's use of them, are nothing. And God's action in this matter of guardianship is not to be expected unless it is invoked by prayer. If it be asked why our Lord in this counsel should give the first place to watching rather than to prayer, this is readily to be explained by the occasion. He found the Apostles sleeping, though He had solemnly bidden them to watch with him. And hence the first word which rises to his lips is "watch"—closely followed, however, by that second, which was necessary to make it a complete and exhaustive word of counsel, "watch *and pray*." When Nehemiah was building up the dilapidated walls of the holy city, and the enemies of the Jews conspired to hinder him,

[1] Psalm cxxvii. 1.

prayer is represented as being his first resource, the diligent use of the means the second. "We made our prayer unto our God," he says, "and set a watch against them day and night, because of them."[1] We too, as Christians, are engaged in building up the spiritual temple within us amid the opposition of foes, or, to use another Scriptural image, in cultivating, weeding, and fencing the vineyard of our own hearts; and our policy must be the double policy of Nehemiah, if we would bring our work to a prosperous issue—the recognition of our dependence upon God by prayer, combined with a watchfulness which never lays down its arms. The law holds good in the spiritual as in the natural world, that God's operation and man's industry are both of them essential factors in producing the result. Without ploughing, and sowing, and reaping, where would be the harvest? And yet how dependent is the harvest upon those conditions of weather and temperature, which God keeps exclusively in his own control! Man's labour is but a condition of success, for who but God can make a single blade of grass grow a single inch? And so it is in the spiritual world. We must, as the indispensable condition of success, "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," while yet it is "God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."[2]

[1] Nehem. iv. 9.

[2] *See* Phil. ii. 12, 13.

CHAPTER II

THE KEEPING OF THE HEART AT EACH OF ITS AVENUES

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.—PROV. iv. 23, 24, 25, 26.

IN explaining the Parable of the Sower our Lord interpreted the seed as being the word of God; "The seed is the word of God."[1] It might be said conversely that the word of God is a seed—capable, when once lodged in the heart, of wonderful expansion by devout thought. And more especially is this true of all the words of Christ, which are the words of the Personal Word of God. Those two words, which wrap up the counsel given to his sleeping disciples in the garden of the Agony, "Watch and pray," how extraordinarily—I might say how inexhaustibly—comprehensive they are seen to be, when we bring devout thought to bear upon them, each of them expanding into a whole circle of duties, as a seed, nursed by the soil, germinates into the par-

[1] St. Luke viii. 11.

ticular plant or flower of which it is the seed. "Watch" is but a short word, but how manifold are the intimations as to one part of the Christian's duty which are wrapped up in it! Holy Scripture having been all written under the inspiration of one Spirit, who, when He inspired one of the sacred writers, must have had perfect foresight of all that He should put into the minds of others, it is quite conceivable that an earlier passage may have been written to throw light upon a later one; and thus it might almost seem as if the verses of the Book of Proverbs, which are prefixed to this Chapter, had been designed by the Holy Spirit to develope our Lord's meaning in the word "Watch," or at least to sketch for us an outline of the development. We have already observed that the precept to "Watch" against our spiritual foes harmonizes with St. Paul's image of the Christian's being engaged in warfare with the powers of evil. In such warfare sentinels are of the utmost importance for the security, whether of the camp in the field, or of the beleaguered city. Nor is one line of outposts considered sufficient in the field, nor one line of fortifications in the city. When the outposts are driven in from the furthest line, they have the next to fall back upon; and notice being given of an impending attack, the troops in the camp make ready for battle. Now, let us study in the passage before us the different avenues to the human heart, all of which have to be kept or guarded, if the citadel of man's soul is to be secured in its warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

But first, what is the heart, which we are here exhorted to keep or mount guard over? It is best

understood of the whole of the inner man, and as comprising all the actings of the soul—its imaginations, its emotions, its reasonings, and especially that faculty of reflecting and passing a moral judgment on its own acts, which goes by the name of conscience. In putting in practice the precept to watch, this is the chief thing to be watched—the heart, with all its manifold and innumerable movements of desire, fancy, speculation, thought. The wise man therefore urges the guardianship of the heart as the one thing of prime importance ; " Keep thy heart with all diligence ;" or, as it seems to be better and more forcibly rendered in the margin of the Authorised Version, " Keep thy heart above all keeping ;" use in keeping it greater vigilance than thou wouldst use in guarding any earthly treasure, however precious. And the particular treasure which is instanced, is that which in hot climates, and in the arid, sandy deserts of the East, is the most precious of all treasures, seeing that life hangs upon the possession of it, and upon its being secured from contamination—a fountain or well. We read in the Book of Genesis of stones being rolled from the mouth of wells, which had been placed there to keep them uncontaminated, till they were wanted for the watering of the flocks ;[1] and in the Song of Songs the bride is compared to " a spring shut up, a fountain sealed,"[2] because fountains of water in that climate and country were too valuable not to be guarded with the utmost care. The waters welling up from such a fountain are called " issues of life," partly, perhaps, because they are living and not stagnant, but chiefly, I apprehend, because natural

[1] *See* Gen. xxix. 3, 8, 10. [2] Cant. iv. 12.

life cannot be sustained without a supply of water, and of pure water. But in the moral application of the precept we must go to the Gospels for an explanation of "issues of life," as coming forth from the heart of man. Naturally, as our Lord has told us, its issues are not issues of life, but of death,—foul and contaminating issues: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man."[1] But the words before us are to be understood in the light of our Lord's great saying to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well; "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."[2] And similar language is used by him later in his ministry, at the Feast of Tabernacles; "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said" (probably with an allusion to such Old Testament passages as that in Isaiah lviii., "Thou shalt be like a spring of water, whose waters fail not"[3]), "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."[4] "Shall be in him a well of water," "out of his belly shall flow rivers,"—no mere temporary supply from without, slaking the thirst for an hour or two, but a perennial spring, welling up from the deepest depth of the man's being, from the most secret and hidden place of his personal life. For the

[1] St. Mark vii. 21, 22, 23.
[2] St. John iv. 13, 14.
[3] Verse 11.
[4] St. John vii. 38.

Holy Spirit, when vouchsafed under the Christian Covenant, descends deeper into our nature than the emotions, affections, imaginations, reasonings. He touches what Bishop Ken beautifully calls the "first springs of thought and will;" He makes the very spirit of the man his own, and influences all other parts of the being from that which is indeed its root. And his influences, *so far forth as they are his* (it is necessary to make this qualification, because as He acts through a sinful will and affections, the good works which He prompts are never without some taint of evil, just as pure water flowing through an impure channel is fouled thereby), I say, *so far forth as they are his*, his influences are indeed "issues of life," proceeding forth from the heart of man. "Keep this heart," then, as a jealous guardian over the Spirit's gracious impulses, which are indeed in the truest and highest sense thy life; or, to throw the same idea into another form, and to present it under other Scripture imagery, "Quench not the Spirit;"[1] shield and protect from the world's rude breath the flame of grace, which has been kindled on the altar of thy heart.

Before passing on to the several avenues of the heart, each of which has to be guarded, let us not omit to observe that the Christian *himself* is spoken of as a fountain, which fertilises the surrounding country, and to try ourselves by the test which this circumstance suggests. "What is that fountain," says Augustine, "and what is that river, which flows from the belly of the inner man? The kindness, which disposes a man to consult his neighbour's

[1] 1 Thess. v. 19.

interests. For if any one thinks that what he drinks is meant to satisfy himself alone, out of his belly there doth not flow living water. But if he is quick to consult for his neighbour, then he doth not run dry, because he flows."[1] The spiritual life is, by the first law of its being, communicative of itself to others; it is a fountain which cannot but send forth abroad its fertilising rills—a candle, whose clear shining cannot but give light to all that are in the house. Has the grace, which has been vouchsafed to me, made the small patch of human society in my neighbourhood greener and more morally flourishing than it would have been without me? Has the light kindled by the Holy Spirit on my heart so shone before men, that they have seen my good works, and glorified my Heavenly Father?[2]

Having seen what the heart is, which has to be kept, we now come to consider the avenues to it, which the Wise Man indicates in this very profound and far-reaching passage.

(1) The tongue is the first and nearest of these avenues; it is the chief sallyport of the heart, by which its sentiments, whether good or evil, find a vent. What ceaseless vigilance must this sallyport demand, if it were only that so vast a multitude of words passes out of it every day in the necessary commerce of life! Whence it is that the amount

[1] "Quid est fons, et quid est fluvius, qui manat de ventre interioris hominis? Benevolentia, quâ vult consulere proximo. Si enim putet quia quod bibit soli ipsi debet sufficere, non fluit aqua viva de ventre ejus: si autem proximo festinat consulere, ideo non siccat, quia manat." (In Johannis Evang. cap. 7. Tractat. xxxii. §. 4.)

[2] *See* St. Matt. v. 16.

of a man's control over his tongue is, we are assured, a satisfactory test of his exercising self-control in all other respects. "If any man offend not in word," says St. James, "the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body,"[1] not that control over the tongue *constitutes* perfection, but that, being so exceedingly difficult a grace, it is a satisfactory criterion of a man's having reached such perfection as may be reached by heirs of sinful flesh and blood. And it is not only the necessary multitudinousness of our words, which makes watchfulness over the tongue so necessary, but the moral influence which they exert upon those who hear them. "A little word of enticement," says a good commentator, "may open the door to an untold career of sin! An impure witticism may kindle the flames of hateful lust, with all its hateful deeds. What boundless mischief is wrought in the world by . . . unguarded sayings, words of hatred and strife!" Nor is the vast importance of mounting guard upon this sallyport at all adequately appreciated by merely observing the moral mischief which wrong words may do to others. The tongue, by venting unkind, or malicious, or impure sentiments, greatly aggravates the sentiment which it vents, and does a moral mischief to *ourselves*. ("So is the tongue among our members," again says St. James, "that it defileth the whole body,"—in other words, the tongue is a faculty which spots and stains our entire moral character,—"and setteth on fire the course of nature," that is, the whole of our life from our birth, "and it is set on fire of hell."[2]) Who knows not, to take

[1] James iii. 2. [2] James iii. 6.

only a single instance, how a sore feeling towards others is fomented by talking over their faults? (The fault grows in dimensions, when it is talked over, until it appears to us to be much more serious than in truth it is.) And hence it comes to pass that one of the established rules for the government of the tongue is to talk as little as possible about persons whom we do not, and feel that we cannot, like.—Words, then, being capable of doing so much moral mischief as well as so much good to ourselves and others, that it is no exaggeration of the wise man to say that "death and life *are* in the power of the tongue,"[1] and the possibility of offending in word being open to us every hour, it can be no matter of surprise that this should be the first avenue, at which guard has to be mounted by those who would keep the heart with all diligence; "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee." "Perverse lips" are those, which divert from those uses for which it was designed, and employ for different uses, that noblest of faculties, the faculty of speech. It was designed for the blessing of God, and for the edification, instruction, and recreation of men. To employ it for the cursing of men, or for instilling moral poison into their minds, or simply to employ it for no good end, speaking idle words, such as can neither edify, instruct, or entertain, this it is to have the "froward mouth" and the "perverse lips," which we are here instructed to "put away."

(2) The next avenue to the heart is one by which there is a constant entrance into it, not, like that

[1] Prov. xviii. 21.

which we have already considered, a constant egress from it. It has to be guarded against evil rushing in, not against evil flowing out. This is the avenue of the senses, the chief of which is mentioned, to denote all. "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." The first temptation was a normal and typical one; it furnished the model of all temptations which should come after; and the first temptation operated through the eye; "The woman saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes"[1] (*marg.* "a desire to the eyes"). And who, that knows himself at all, knows not how evil may be insinuated through the eye? It has been the first step towards the ruin of many a poor girl, that she has allowed herself to stand outside a shop window, hankering after the fine dresses or the trinkets which have been displayed within, and calling to mind that such things were procurable by the sacrifice of her virtue.

But the ear no less than the eye must be jealously guarded, if the heart is to be kept with all diligence. If we must be cautious as to what proceeds out of our mouth, no less cautious does it behove us to be as to what enters into our ear from the mouth of our neighbours. It was through the ear that the insinuations and suggestions of the tempter were instilled into the mind of Eve; "The serpent said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said . . . Ye shall not surely die."[2] It was through the ear that in after days he addressed our Blessed Lord, insinuating that the voice from heaven at his baptism must have been an illusion; for that the

[1] Gen. iii. vi. [2] Gen. iii. 1, 2, 4.

heavenly Father would never place his Son in such a position, that necessary sustenance should be lacking to Him.[1] And still, as of old, moral poison is instilled through the ear; and that not only in forms in which the poisonousness of it is manifest and patent, but in the more seemingly harmless guise of slanderous gossip. It is written, "Thou shalt not go up and down *as* a talebearer among thy people;"[2] and the talebearer's occupation would be gone, if there were no persons ready to receive and gloat over a false report raised against a neighbour's character, or at least a report which, if it have some basis of truth in it, has yet been grievously swollen and aggravated in communicating it. Such tales do a moral mischief to him who listens, as well as to him who retails them.

(3) The third avenue to the heart here mentioned corresponds with the first, in so far that through it the heart does not receive impressions from, but makes them upon, the outer world. This is the avenue of moral action. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established" (*marg.* "all thy ways shall be ordered aright"). Precipitate and rash action in grave matters, action dictated solely by the prevailing impulse of the moment (such as was Moses's action, when he struck the rock twice instead of speaking to it, as he had been instructed to do), has often terminated, as indeeed it did in Moses's case, in a great disaster.[3] And merely mechanical action—the moving in the groove of our daily duties with as little design and thoughtfulness as a

[1] *See* St. Matt. iii. 17, and iv. 3. [2] Lev. xix. 16.
[3] *See* Num. xx. 10, 11, 12.

horse when he goes round in a mill,—this too is an unwatchfulness of the heart in the department of action. As far as human frailty will permit, each little trifling piece of duty which presents itself to us in daily life, if it be only a compliance with some form of social courtesy, should receive a consecration, by setting God—his will, word, and Providence—before us in it, and by lifting up our hearts to Him in ejaculatory prayer, while we are engaged in it. The idea must be thoroughly worked into the mind, and woven into the texture of our spiritual life, that the minutest duties which God prescribes to us in the order of his Providence—a casual visit, a letter of sympathy, an obligation of courtesy—are not by any means too humble to be made means of spiritual advancement, if only the thing be done "as to the Lord, and not to men."[1] And if the action is not in the way of our own will, so much the more scope is there for conforming ourselves in our manner of doing it to the will of God. So that our actions need to be watched no less than the tongue, the eye, the ear; and we, the doers, need to question ourselves, not so much as to what has been done by us daily, as to the spirit which has animated us in doing it. That the heart should be thus kept at each of the avenues, at which it either receives or communicates impressions, this, and nothing less than this, is the charge which our Lord gives to his disciples, when He says to each and all of them, "Watch." The mere rapid sketch of the precept in its main outlines, which has been attempted in this and the preceding Chapter, how vividly does it impress upon us the

[1] *See* Eph. vi. 7.

absolute necessity of recourse to the divine aid—that recourse to which He counsels us in the other precept which He so closely associates with this—"Watch *and pray*." "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh *but* in vain."[1] "We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night."[2]

[1] Ps. cxxvii. 1. [2] Neh. iv. 9.

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